

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
KING RICHARD
COEUR-DE-LION.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
THE DEATH
OF
LORD FALKLAND:
A POEM.

BY J. WHITE, ESQ.
AUTHOR OF EARL STRONGBOW, AND JOHN OF GAUNT,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR T. AND J. EVANS,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.
M,DCC,XCI.

ADVANTAGES
OF
KING RICHARD
COUR-DE-LION

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE
LORD
A FORM



BY J. WHITE, ESQ.
AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE
IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOLUME II

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. AND J. EVANS,
LATER-KING-STREET,
M.DCCCLXX.

P R E F A C E.

WHEREAS, in a former work*,
I addrest thee, courteous Reader, in
the character of an old antiquary, I
now acquaint thee, that, like the fire
of Jason, I have been restored to my
pristine vigour. By what Medean
charms, I will not here discover.

Divers have been the opinions
formed, and the sentences pro-
nounced, touching the sublime ad-
ventures of the great Duke of Lan-
caster, and of the no less great and

A 2 valourous

* The Adventures of John of Gaunt,
Duke of Lancaster.

valorous Earl Strongbow; the volumes in which they are recorded treating of the achievements of ancient chivalry, and of the memorable turns of fortune, and very marvellous occurrences, that were incident to the knightly profession. Furthermore they depict, and, as it were, introduce to the familiarity of the reader, many characters and callings, both spiritual and temporal, unknown to modern days, and which, in the perpetual vicissitude of things, have been swept from the face of the round world, and consigned to a deplorable oblivion.

Divers, I say, have been the opinions entertained and declared concerning these my labours. The
 Milliners

Milliners and Mantua-makers, at the circulating libraries, were fain to inquire what was chivalry; what were knights, and squires, and minstrels, and palfreys, and ushers, and tournaments, and hauberks, and morions, and lances, and the whole apparatus of chivalry? In fine, they were dissatisfied, saying, "they did not understand *them there sort of things*, and had rather have somewhat else, that *showed life*." Moreover, they complained, that the very language of my chronicles was as old-fashioned as the affairs which I recorded; being destitute of the familiar flow, and the modish phraseology, of those delicate histories in a series of letters, which heretofore

they had been in the habit of perusing*.

The Boarding-schools, *where young ladies are genteelly educated*, were not perfectly decided in their opinion. The damsels of the head classes, who had clandestinely procured my chronicles at the libraries, and read them very carefully in bed, complained bitterly, that, instead of being founded

* As for example :—" But, dearest Harriet, what shall I do?—Sir William's coming—bewitching creature ! They say he has ruined nine women already—but I like him the better for that—Ah ! heavens !—Love, you know, is tyrannical—The girl has not brought my stays home yet—Ah ! heavens !—my little heart flutters—But I hear the chariot—adieu ! Pity your poor Letitia."

founded on some delicious love-intrigue, branching out into various disasters, and divinely wheeling round to a wedding at the conclusion, the volumes which I indited, dealt but slenderly in love, whilst the heroes thereof were not half wicked enough, *so they were not*. They observed also, that those same knights gave one another such hideous knocks, (*lud a mercy! such knocks!*) in their tilts and their tournaments, that it *actually* made one's flesh creep but to read of them. On the other hand, indeed, they confessed, that the descriptions of the *young ladies*, in those chronicles of chivalry, were, some of them, *monstrous pretty*, and that the speeches they made to their lovers, and their lovers to them,

were *vastly ravishing*, 'pon *their lives and honour*. The Boarding-schools, therefore, were neither for me, nor against me; but maintained a proud neutrality.

With respect to other seminaries of learning in this kingdom, the youthful at the Universities have been pleased to commend the adventure of the Black Prince and his brethren, in the forest where they were captured by Raymond of the *busby beard**, and have unanimously pronounced it to be *no bad lounge*. The lads of Westminster and Eton thought it *a devilish good rou*. I trust, therefore, that these generous youths will continue to take my
part,

* Vide John of Gaunt, Vol. I.

part, and not see me browbeaten by the Milliners and Boarding-schools.

I come now to persons of quality. The Countesses and Viscountesses, and other matrons of distinction, with their celestial daughters and nieces, were of opinion, that these Gothic chronicles were amusing enough, *while one's hair was dressing*; and, as their Ladyships were not unacquainted with the works of Ariosto, and other renowned *Romanzatori*, the customs and manners of chivalry were familiar to them. In fine, they agreed, that such volumes were not amiss *of a wet Sunday, or in the week before Easter*.

As to the Nobles, Knights, and Gentry of the realm, who were like-

wife not unknowing in the ways of ancient chivalry, they found that they could relish my productions, and considered them as no indifferent representations of those scenes which, in ages past, were acted in the castles of their progenitors.

The Bishops, and other well-disposed Clergy, were of opinion, that my romances had a tendency to promote good morals. But all the *buck* Parsons were against me.

I know not what reception my said chronicles may have experienced at the modern *Hôtel de Rambouillet**,
where

* In the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the house of the Marchioness de Rambouillet,

where there is a rare assemblage (as I understand) of the learned and poetical, and likewise of sundry persons of honour and quality, some of whom are reported to be gothically given, and to have dabbled in romance themselves.

Now shouldst thou, courteous Reader, be inclined to marvel at beholding my name in the title-page, with a retinue of my works, be it known to thee, that it is placed there as a protection to my property. For I have been a sufferer, by venturing into public anonymously; my labours
being

bouillet, a woman of wit and learning, was the rendezvous of all the *literati* of Paris, and persons of the first distinction were solicitous to be admitted amongst them.

being thereby attributed to persons who verily had no hand therein. Witness the simile of *the Moon**, which, for several years past, hath been ascribed to divers witty senators, and persons of *great fashion*, who enjoyed the credit thereof to such an alarming degree, that I found no little difficulty in making good my pretensions to it. For I, being no senator, nor person of *great fashion*, was supposed to be in no wise the author of such a thing; and very many Duchesses, and other elevated people, could ill bear to take back, from their favourites in the House of Commons, that applause which they had been for a long time in the habit

* Printed at the end of the Poem on Conway Castle.

habit of bestowing on them. Whereupon I determined that, thenceforth and for ever, I would put my name upon my works, as I would upon my portmanteau.

And I do hereby warn all witty senators, and persons of quality, to beware, in future, how they meddle with what doth not belong to them; being firmly resolved to make seizure of my property, wheresoever, and on whomsoever I shall find it; and this, in spite of all the Duchesses under the sun, be they ever so amiable and beautiful. And I likewise beseech these high-born and illustrious ladies to be cautious how they father stray wit upon their acquaintances, to the injury of the real parent.

And

And here, Reader, if thou shouldst wish to learn why I have chosen rather to pourtray the manners and the characters of ages past, in preference to those of the moderns; be it known to thee, that I consider the task of delineating the follies of the present times, as already in better hands; to wit, in the hands of that queen of novelists, the incomparable authoress of *Cecilia*. I leave, therefore, to that humorous maiden the supremacy in what are in general termed *novels*; resolving to explore the remote doings of antiquity, to *show life*, as life was, in those heroic days, and evince that our forefathers were as foolish as we are ourselves. To this end have I addicted myself to Gothic romances; adhering (at least

least, I believe so) right closely to the manners and customs of early times, when chivalry and the feudal system prevailed throughout all Europe. To speak in the language of painters, “the *costumi* have been preserved.”

Finally, courteous Reader, let me muster and review my strength, that I may see how I stand in the estimation of the community.

The Milliners and Mantua-makers are, to a girl, against me.—The Boarding-schools are not hearty in my cause.—The *buck* Parsons detest me mortally.

On the other hand (and fortunate is it for me), the Countesses and Viscountesses,

countesses, their celestial daughters and nieces, have been graciously pleased to think favourably of my labours: for which instance of their benignity I here make due acknowledgment. The Nobles, Knights, and Gentry of the realm, together with a few Merchants who are given to the love of literature, seem likewise to be of opinion that my chronicles have merit. The Prelates, and other well-disposed Clergy, speak well of me. The Students at the Universities despise me not; and, to crown my prosperity, the Lads of Westminster and Eton are determined to stand by me. *Victoria!* huzza! huzza!

 A D V E N T U R E S

OF

K I N G R I C H A R D

C Œ U R - D E - L I O N.

 C H A P. I.

THE Sun had illuminated the eastern horizon, when Richard King of England, renowned in history by the surname of *Cœur-de-Lion*, departed from that fortress in which he had been held captive by the unknighly Duke of Austria. Light was the heart of the hero, once more restored to liberty. He bestrode his favourite and

Vol. I.

B

famous

famous steed Arlino, and accosted him in these expressions :—" Companion of my triumphs, of my travels, of my captivity, collect all thy swiftness, and bear away thy master from this hated principality !—Fly ! fly, my courser, from this region of oppression ! We traverse not now the plains of Palestine, where victory and glory were our portion.—Fly ! fly, my courser, and bear thy impatient lord to the dominions of his forefathers !" —Arlino understood the exhortation of his royal rider, and, ere night intruded on the empire of the day, had conveyed him beyond the frontiers of Austria.

The minstrel Fitzherbert accompanied the King. From him had the English nation first learnt the fate of their long-lost, and long-lamented sovereign. Wandering through Europe
in

in the exercise of his art, he at length entered the territories of the perfidious Duke of Austria. In what manner he became known to the imprisoned King of England, hath been copiously recorded in the chronicles of this realm.

No sooner had they quitted the Austrian borders, than the minstrel thus addressed the royal hero :—" Be not offended, magnanimous and valiant prince, at the advice of the faithful Fitzherbert. The fame of your high exploits hath filled the earth: you are become the envy of its potentates. Should the Princes of those provinces through which we are to pass, become acquainted with your quality; avarice, or some other unworthy motive, may, peradventure, induce them to detain your person, and a second captivity will attend the heroic Richard. Conceal

therefore, intrepid *Cœur-de-Lion*, your kingly dignity; erase from your target the armorial ensigns of the house of Plantagenet; assume the condition of a warrior less illustrious. So shall you escape those snares, against which your valour, your exalted valour, were an insufficient guard, and at length regain the happy shores of England, to reign over an affectionate and unconquerable people."

Fitzherbert ended, and the Monarch thus replied:—"Minstrel, thy words are wise. A tedious and ignominious imprisonment hath taught me, that prudence and circumspection are as necessary as valour to the sons of chivalry." He said, and having drawn forth a dagger from his baldrick, obliterated from his target the device of the Plantagenets.

And

And now the ears of King Richard and the minstrel, who had entered a prodigious and horrid forest, were assailed by the creaking of wheels, and ever and anon by the cracking of huge whips; sounds with which the desert re-echoed. At length they espied a black waggon, which was drawn by six fable horses, and driven by two persons in lugubrious apparel. In the waggon, upon a cushion of black serge that was stuffed with black horse-hair, sat a sober-looking lady, neither young nor old. She was clad in a robe of black velvet; on her head she wore a coif of black satin, which was tied beneath her chin. In her hand was a piece of black gauze, which she was dotting with black silk, by way of pastime. She likewise blew her nose with a black handkerchief. At one side of her lay a black cat, and on the other

a black dog. In fine, her accompaniments were all very black.

By the waggon rode a venerable usher, whose garments corresponded with the equipage of his lady. As soon as the Royal Knight was in view, this usher advanced towards him, and, having come sufficiently near, with a solemn and respectful air accosted him in these words : —“ You would doubtless know, Sir Knight, who yonder lady is, that rides in the black waggon, and wherefore, thus dismally attired and attended, she journeys through lonesome forests, notwithstanding the many perils with which such places are infested. Be it known then, gallant warrior (for such you seem to be), that that personage is the Lady Ursulina, the uncomfortable relict of the valorous Sir Lodowick, a worthier knight than whom the high heavens
never

never created. He perished in Palestine, fighting against the Infidels.

" No sooner was it certified that Sir Lodowick was no more, than a certain knight, Sir Leopold, who inherits an ancient castle upon the banks of the Danube, came hastily to the mansion of the Lady Urfulina (whose usher I am), and proclaimed himself her adorer, according to the most approved forms laid down by the rules of chivalry: for my lady hath ample tenements. Now she, in whose heart the image of her deceased lord was engraven, as if upon brass, had determined to devote the residue of her days to lamentation for the memory of Sir Lodowick, to daily, nay hourly orisons, for the repose of his departed spirit.

“ But the strenuous Sir Leopold would hear of no denial. He besieged the eyes of my lady with various and gay habiliments, and her ears with music and poesy. She, blind to his decorations, and deaf to his minstrelsy, immured herself continually in the chambers of her castle, pondering on the virtues of him whom she had lost, and disdaining every effort of her indefatigable suitor. At length she bade him be gone. But he, obstinate and crafty, and suspecting that his ill success was the result of mistaken measures, corrupted one of her damsels, who thereupon revealed to him a secret concerning my lady, which went near to undermine her resolution of perpetual widowhood.

CHAP. II.

“**K**NOW then,” continued the usher, “that the Lady Ursulina, who hath in a manner vowed that she will never change that sorrowful attire, (save only for a certain vestment of black and white stripes, the customary garb of those who respectably persist in widowhood) hath nevertheless an extreme liking to wear magnificent apparel. Feebly, alas! very feebly, can she combat with this propensity; especially if the apparel have been chosen with due taste, and accord well with the modes now in use amongst the courtly. There is oftentimes, I fear, a secret struggle within her breast, betwixt the wise desire of adhering to sober weeds, and her innate affection for finery.”

Here

Here the waggon of the Lady Urfulina was delayed, by reason of some difficulty in the road. Her usher therefore thus continued his discourse:—" This circumstance being ungratefully and disloyally betrayed, the guileful Sir Leopold departed from the castle, and travelled far and wide, in quest of whatsoever was deemed beautiful and costly for the ornament of womankind. He repaired, artful man, to Genoa, to Padua, and other Italian cities, renowned for manufactories of silk and velvet, and there likewise procured many gorgeous and rare articles from Barbary and the Indies. This effected, he returned, with fresh hope and alacrity, to the castle of the Lady Urfulina.

" No sooner had he arrived, than he perfidiously sent her a present of violet-coloured velvet, having silver sprigs on
it

it in a new and pleasing manner. My lady (such is the unsteadiness of human nature) beheld it with a mixture of wrath and satisfaction. She chid me severely, for suffering it to be brought in: nevertheless, she caused the velvet to be unrolled, and bade her damsels apply one corner of it to her shoulder, and suffer the rest to flow down, while she looked upon it sideways, to observe how it became her. But ere long her wrath re-kindled: she flung the velvet from her disdainfully. ‘Take back,’ said my lady, addressing herself to me, ‘this trash to him that sent it.’ So saying, she sat down, and leaned upon her elbow, and, having placed her left leg upon her right knee, dangled it in a manner that denoted much discomfort.

“ I gathered up the velvet, and was about to take it thence, when the Lady
Ursulina

Ursulina bade me not be in such a hurry. ‘ Let me look at that velvet,’ said she. I unrolled it once more in her presence :—she admired the sprigs afresh, and, as far as I could discern, set her heart upon them hugely. ‘ The traitor,’ cried my lady, ‘ hath an intention to undo me.’ And here she shed a tear. ‘ But I will be firm,’ continued the Lady Ursulina ; ‘ the relict of Sir Lodowick shall prove a model to her sex ; not a victim to the wiles of an insidious persecutor, who would fain allure her to the altar a second time, to the disparagement of her fame, and the destruction of her revenues.’ So saying, she took the velvet by the corner, and, having thrown it to me peevishly, commanded me to bear it from her sight for ever.

“ I gathered up the offering of Sir Leopold once more, and squeezing it under

under my arm, was preparing once more to depart, when I perceived the leg of my lady still in motion; whereby I divined, that she was inwardly unwilling to send away the violet-coloured velvet. She likewise frowned considerably. Whereupon I lingered at the door. At length, aware of the conflict which was likely to arise a second time in the bosom of the Lady Ursulina, and solicitous for the fame and welfare of my widowed mistress, I deemed it a wise thing to steal quietly from her presence; which done, I dispatched a messenger with the velvet to Sir Leopold. He, in no wise disheartened with the rigour of her he wooed, soon after made another assault; which determined the Lady Ursuline to quit her fair domains, and adopt the resolution which in due order I will relate to you.

“ Ere

" Ere three days, then, had elapsed from the returning of his first present, Sir Leopold attempted her with a second, more alarming in its nature, and more important in its consequences. The faithless damsel, who, as I have already observed, had betrayed the ruling foible of my lady, had likewise supplied Sir Leopold with the dimensions of her mistress, and that so very accurately, that he thereby procured a costly garment to be made, which fitted her, alas ! but too neatly. It consisted, I well remember, of a body of pink sattin, with a murray-coloured train of the richest silk of Padua, together with a white petticoat of satin fringed with gold, in the centre whereof was the coat of arms of the Lady Ursuline, embroidered in gold and silver. The train also was spotted with golden stars, which seemed as it were

were to twinkle, so admirably were they executed.

" This severe, this inhuman assault upon my lady, was conducted in the manner following.—The wicked damsel, by whose perfidy her foible had been discovered, and her measure taken, conveyed this seducing and inauspicious garment, at dead of night, into the chamber of the Lady Ursuline, who had already yielded her senses to the dominion of sleep. The arch-traitress spread it out upon an elbow-chair, which was placed near the bed-side, in such a position, that when my lady should draw open her curtains in the morning, this offering from Sir Leopold might prove the first object to salute her eyes.

" No sooner, therefore, had the sad relict of Sir Lodowick put aside her
curtains

curtains with a gentle hand, than she beheld, with a mixture of astonishment and doubt, the resplendent habiliment which lay beside her. Thrice did she rub her eyes (for so the damsel told me, who had concealed herself in the chamber), as deeming it a dream, or peradventure some act of magic. But when she had stretched forth her ivory arm, and touched the satin and the fringe, she sunk back upon her pillow, and there crossed herself devoutly. ‘Blessed Mary!’ cried she, ‘surely this can be no illusion.’ Having thus exclaimed, she started from her bed, and seized the satin body with the same eagerness and ardour, with which a youthful knight lays hold of his new hauberk, that is just brought home to him by the armourer. She applies it to her waist; it fits divinely. She makes trial of the train, and

and of the petticoat; there also had the tailor given proofs of his capacity.

“ And now, clothed *cap-à-pie*, she presented herself to the mirror, which faithfully reflected all the richness of her drapery. There did the Lady Ursulina adjust the various parts, till the whole was in concord with her graceful form, which had never before looked so lovely. She smiled, and forgot that she was a widow. At length, having fatiated her eyes, and satisfied her soul that the garment well became her, she disrobed, and returned to her pillow, where she fell into the following soliloquy: ‘ Is it then come to this? I have as it were sworn to persevere in my viduity, to exhibit a grand pattern of woe to womankind; and shall this subtle suitor, thus audaciously indefatigable, subdue me, by arming my vanity against my pride?’

There was but one weak part, but one approach, and Sir Leopold hath found it. Wretch that I am, ah! whither shall I turn? The love of fame, and the love of finery, distract me. On one hand I behold the magnificence of sorrow, the glories of the widowed state, and the applause and admiration which await them; on the other, the temptation of taste, displayed in such apparel as no woman can withstand. I cannot keep the gift, and scorn the giver. And yet, should I refuse it, where, within the limits of this barbarous empire, could I find its parallel? Who, but the gallant and undispirited Sir Leopold, would have crossed so many dismal and ferocious kingdoms, to explore, in distant climes, the productions of art and elegance? Widowhood and honour—a second husband and fine clothes: thus stands the perplexity.

In

“ In this condition of mind my lady at length arose, and was heard to speak mildly of Sir Leopold at breakfast. Now this being reported to him, he straightway sent her a present of corals, which he had purchased at Venice, and which originally had been brought from Grand Cairo. Rich corals had been seen in Germany before; but, for delicacy of workmanship, and taste in the setting, nothing in these regions had ever appeared so beautiful. It was enough: my lady could not resist them; the corals of Grand Cairo completed her overthrow. She consented to admit Sir Leopold that evening to her presence; a visit, from which he departed with hopes bordering upon certainty.

C H A P. III.

“THE rumour of this, however, reached the ears of an ancient matron, who resided in the neighbourhood, and whose words were a law to my lady. She was a person of noble lineage, shrewd wit, and dignified demeanour. No sooner, then, was it known to her that Sir Leopold was mollifying my lady, than she caused her waggon to be made ready, and was, ere long, at the gates of our castle.

“The unexpected arrival of the Lady of Altemburgh (for so was this dame entitled) created curiosity throughout the mansion; insomuch, that one of the waiting-women put her ear to the key-hole, and overheard the noble matron address my lady in these words: ‘Marvel

vel not, Urfulina, at this visit.—Fame
 faith that you are tottering on the brink
 of second matrimony, and that the bare-
 faced Sir Leopold is the object of your
 love. I could have looked with less
 concern, less amazement on this mea-
 sure, had you not ostentatiously and im-
 prudently adopted the rueful furniture
 of widowhood, to an extent and an ex-
 travagance unheard of in the nation.
 What! then, is the fable waggon so
 precipitately to be discharged?—Are
 these melancholy curtains and cushions,
 this black attire, and all the pride of
 sadness, to be suddenly abandoned for
 the livery of joy; and shall these charm-
 bers, now silent in compliment to your
 sorrow, resound with the uproar of re-
 velry and carousal?—Can the memory
 of Sir Lodowick be so soon obliterated?
 Had your mourning been conducted
 with moderation, the transition to a se-

cond marriage would appear less reprehensible.

“ You may remember, that I was adverse to this violence of *black*—Your black waggon, your black cushions, the black plumes to your cattle, and your black velvet work-bag, were contrary to my counsels. For, knowing that you were opulent, I foresaw that you would be invaded by a host of stubborn suitors, and wished that your surrender might have the praise of due decorum.—A considerate relict would have tarried, at least, till her sad attire had been shaded off by just degrees, and had finally faded to the very confines of gaiety.—To exchange these solemn weeds for a wedding garment, were an act of much temerity; it were too disrespectful to the memory of your late Lord, to escape the sarcasms of the severe; nor could clemency

clemency herself forgive it. For these reasons, Urfulina, lay aside your present project: reverence your own fame: heap discouragement on Sir Leopold; at least postpone your tenderness to a season more remote, nor rush with indecent hurry from the tomb-stone to the altar.—Thus, child, shall you avoid the extremes of black and white.

“ If a fondness for vain apparel have betrayed you into this dilemma (and I verily believe that it hath), change the object and the mode, and you may yet give the passion full way.—Search into every precedent; explore all the annals of widowhood, for whatsoever was held rare and astonishing in times past, with relation to the garb of grief, and the parade which a relict may maintain. If your vanity, my Urfulina, must be occupied, indulge it there unboundedly.

—Be the grandest and most dismal of widowed women: consume in woe, what you would have spent upon festivity. If to excite admiration be the ambition of our sex, what matter, whether it be accomplished by a red robe, or a black one?

“ Here ended the Lady of Altemburg. My honoured mistress was affected by her discourse: she shed some few tears, but, upon the whole, was much comforted. The arguments of her venerable adviser had sunk deeply into her heart; and to the end that she might ponder them without interruption, she enjoined me to refuse admittance to her suitor for three days. Now this was a mortal stroke to the expectations of Sir Leopold; for, the more my lady reflected on the advice of that noble matron, the more was she delighted there-
with;

with ; till at length she adopted the design of extending her days of mourning to a term which should cause amazement in the children of men, and of improving the pride of sorrow with new symbols of lamentation. This term expired, there would be room for deliberating, whether my lady should assume the habit of the black and white stripes, the signal of perpetual widowhood ; or give ear to the solicitations of some pertinacious suitor. In fine, it was the unalterable resolution of the Lady Ursulina, to erect herself into a model, for all such as might pant after the comfortable condition of a discreet and praise-deserving relict.

“ Accordingly it was agreed, that I should carry back the presents which Sir Leopold had sent to my lady (but without suffering her to behold them once more ;

for that would have revived the mischiefs which we were endeavouring to remedy), and formally forbid him the castle. Yet, notwithstanding this prohibition, there was good reason to apprehend the insidious attacks of Sir Leopold. Therefore did I dutifully and respectfully exhort the Lady Ursulina to depart from her then residence for a season, and repair to a strong castle, which is situated on an island, in the midst of a pleasant lake, not far distant, Sir Knight, from this forest. There, fortified by the surrounding water, she may bid defiance to the arts and the audacity of her enemies. The environs of the lake are to be defended by her retainers, disposed in proper stations, with a strict injunction to suffer none to approach the castle without a passport from me, and to be careful, lest any disguised present from

Sir

Sir Leopold obtain admittance, to the violation of her tranquillity.

“ This advice was well received : it was balm to the mind of my lady. Yesterday we set out upon the journey ; little doubting, that we should meet some valiant knight upon the way, who would courteously escort my lady to the Castle of the Lake ; lest the rude and revengeful Leopold, in despair at our departure, should pursue us with his vassals, and infringe upon our liberty. Therefore, courageous stranger, I beseech you, on behalf of the afflicted whom I serve, to afford us the aid of your high valour (I am old and feeble), and accompany us to the Castle of the Lake.”

Here paused the venerable Usher ; for the waggon was now at hand.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

AND now the King of England, advancing with a graceful air, accosted the Lady Urfulina.—“The high heavens,” cried he, “preserve you, mournful relict, from the fraud of all such as would sap and overthrow the fair fame which, as this your worthy usher hath informed me, you have now in contemplation to acquire. From their violence fear no outrage; for this arm is your defender.”

So spake King Richard. But the Lady Urfulina, laying aside her dotting with her right hand, and stroaking her black cat with her left, replied to the royal hero as follows:—“Assuredly, courteous knight, some saint or angel who hath innocence in charge, hath
sent

sent you to my succour in this my sore affliction. Never yet hath widow suffered such persecution as I have. Whoever then you are, Sir Knight (and that you are of noble state is well denoted by your demeanour), let my life, my liberty, my chastity, my fame, be safe, beneath the shadow of your valour, until we shall have arrived at a certain strong fortress, whither I now flee (I, afflicted and disconsolate) for an asylum from my suitors, or, more properly, my persecutors." She said, and having drawn from her black pocket a black handkerchief, remained for some moments in a lugubrious situation.

The illustrious *Cœur-de-Lion* was affected by her sorrow: he leaned upon his lance in silence, till the torrent of her silver tears was exhausted. Then, turning about Arlino, he proceeded with
the

the waggon to the extremity of the forest, where they espied a traveller sitting beneath the shade of a tree, with his head between his hands, which were rested upon his knees. Beside him grazed a palfrey, whose caparisons showed its lord to be of no indigent condition. When the waggon drew near, he lifted up his eyes, and craved permission of the Royal Knight, and of the Lady Ursulina, to join himself to their company, as far as they intended to travel; and this, for a reason which he would afterwards unfold.

The relict of Sir Lodowick, and her intrepid protector, consented to the petition of the stranger, who thereupon arose, and with great gladness and agility remounted his palfrey. This done, they continued on their way

And

And now the stranger, not forgetful of his promise, addressed his companions in these words:—"A wish for society, not the fear of such perils as are common in the wilderness, was the motive of my desiring to bear you company, disastrous Lady (for such do I imagine you to be), and you, most courteous Knight, of whose valour and august ancestry I make no question. I am destined, by an unheard-of and afflicting fatality, to be a wanderer for the residue of my days; although possessed of whatsoever can contribute to enjoyment, if castles, and fair domains, and friends, and good repute, are entitled to the name of prosperity. Some fifteen years ago, as I sat musing one day in my chamber, there suddenly appeared before me a face, the eyes of which seemed steadfastly fixed on me, as if they would have penetrated my most secret

secret cogitations. There was nothing visible but a face, the form of which was oval, the complexion olive, the brows black and prominent. It appeared to be that of a man somewhat stricken in years, but whose vigour was, as yet, unimpaired by his longevity.

“ My astonishment and uneasiness at this vision were extreme: they augmented, when I found that the same face appeared daily. I changed from chamber to chamber, supposing that the apparition was but local. Imagine, then, my vexation, when I perceived that the face still pursued me. It usually appeared about noon, and continued to stare at me till sun-set. I assembled my friends and my domestics, related to them what I had seen, and endeavoured to alleviate the horrors of this persecution, by an unceasing succession of company

pany and diversions. But the face, which was invifible to all but me, ftill punctually was prefent, and, in fpite of the revelry which reigned around me, fpread a gloom over my countenance, and embittered my repofe.

“ At length I bethought me, that to change my dwelling might relieve me from this fpectre; and, accordingly, withdrew to a neighbouring manfion, of which I was then the poffeffor.—But, alas! my indefatigable tormentor was there alfo. I changed my refidence a fecond time, repairing to a caftle in a diftant part of Auftria; but with as little fatisfaction as before: the face, the cruel face, ftill purfued me. I then adopted the refolution of travelling, in the hope that at length I might efcape this peft, by avoiding any fettled abode. I departed, therefore, from my caftle,

and journeyed far and wide; seldom resting in any place for more than a single day, and frequently not even so long.

“ In this, then, was my only refuge; for, wherever I tarried not for an entire day, the face gave me no molestation. With this short indulgence, I have made shift to wear away many years of my existence, in traversing many portions of the globe. I have seen the greater part of Europe, and made a pilgrimage to Palestine: but reflecting that, since I was doomed to be a wanderer perpetually, I might better roam through regions where my kindred, and friends, and possessions, were situated, I returned to my native land, and have ever since continued the same restless mode of living. I once thought of holding a bandage over my eyes, at the hour when the vision

sion re-appeared ; but the severe and undescribable sensation that I felt, when I first made trial of this expedient, convinced me but too well, that no invention, no subterfuge, could afford me consolation.

“ Thus, woeful Lady, and you, accomplished Knight, have I explained the melancholy reason of my desiring to partake of your society. I have now passed and repassed so often through every city and district of Germany, that I am known to all its inhabitants, who lament my condition, and endeavour to alleviate its misery. *The Man of the Face* (for so they style me) is periodically a guest at every monastery, and at most of the castles and other mansions in the empire. The children of the villages run out, as I ride by, and call about them their playfellows, to behold

the Man of the Face. The nurses talk of me to their unruly infants, and tempt them into quietness, by promising that they shall get something from *the Man of the Face.* When I arrive at any castle, the porter hath no need to inquire my name and quality, nor the guardmen to question me from the battlements: but the draw-bridge is instantly raised, and the gates are thrown open; for it is nobody but *the Man of the Face.*”

Here the traveller concluded his narration.

“ I vow to the high heavens” exclaimed the King of England, “ a more extraordinary circumstance hath never reached mine ears.—But inform me, Sir Knight of *the Face*, whether you have ever yet employed some son of Holy Church

Church to exorcise this pestilent phantasm, or conjure it, by the Trinity, to tell the purpose of its appearing?"—"No, truly," replied the traveller: "so irredeemably doomed to its persecution did I think myself, that I looked on all assistance from the priesthood as ineffectual." "Then fail not," said the Lady Urfulina, "to betake yourself to some member of the sacerdotal order; for doubtless, it is a troubled spirit, which some wickedness of its own, or of others, hath occasioned thus to haunt the regions of the living."

C H A P. V.

AND now the lake, encompassing that castle to which the sad relict of Sir Lodowick was hastening, presented its crystal bosom to their view, rejoicing the heart of her who was its illustrious possessor. A boat, which lay in readiness near the margin of this lake, with speedy oars conveyed the cavalcade to the castle. There the usher blew a horn, which was answered by another from the battlements; when straightway a person in a coat of mail looked over, and demanded if that were the Lady Urfulina. Upon hearing that it was, he descended, and, having lifted the draw-bridge, gave admittance to the travellers.

The limits of this high history will not allow me to relate (me, the exact
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inditer of applauded books of chivalry) what banqueting ensued upon the arrival of Richard *Cœur-de-Lion* and the mournful *Man of the Face*, at the castle of the Lady Urfulina. Suffice it to declare, that the supper (for it was now evening) consisted of invigorating viands.

Yet, hungry as King Richard and his companions surely were, there was one thing which attracted their attention, even more than the favoury eatables that smoked upon the board. Now this was no other than the Lady Carolinetta, god-daughter to their hostess; for this illustrious and benignant damsel had purposely repaired thither, to delight her afflicted godmother with the charms of her society, during the period of her residence at the Castle of the Lake.

The Lady Carolinetta was in her sixteenth year. Her face was somewhat roundish, her complexion fair, her cheeks lightly tinged with vermillion. If her teeth resembled ivory, her lips were like new roses, and but little inferior in fragrancy. Her nose was neither long, nor short; had neither that sharpness which denotes ill-humour, nor that curling which is the symbol of fauciness; but was neatly proportioned to the rest of her features. Her blue eyes were as two costly sapphires, over which her long eye-lashes, like golden fringe, played with a soft movement, at once adorning and defending the bright jewels underneath them. Her hair was likewise of a golden hue, and partly impended over her polished forehead, partly descended behind, as far as the summit of her shoulders; for, she being yet but youthful, her tresses had attained not to that

that flowing length which constitutes the perfection of gracefulness. Moreover, there was an incomparable innocence in her looks, and a mirthfulness mingled with a girlish air of diffidence, which often threw a transitory blush upon her face, and augmented the lustre of her beauty.

Nevertheless King Richard, who had not taken sustenance since he had quitted the dominions of Austria, could ill refrain from feeding upon the various viands which the splendid hospitality of the Lady Ursulina had caused to be set before him: yet ever and anon would he send his inquiring eyes towards the radiant god-daughter of his hostess. As for the minstrel and the *Man of the Face*, they had already resigned their admiration to the King of England, and employed themselves in administering to the

the necessities of nature. The Lady Carolinetta ate sparingly, as becometh a maiden, and gracefully picked a bit of chicken. Upon the whole, the Lady Urfulina herself was not a little hungry (having travelled considerably that day), and, notwithstanding her courteous attention to her guests, found means to pacify the cravings of her appetite.

The banquet being concluded, the hoary usher announced the arrival of fundry persons, who had been ferried over the lake from several mansions not distant from its borders, with intention to welcome the Lady Urfulina to these parts. This company consisted of divers knights and squires, together with dames and damsels renowned for worth and beauty. Full graciously did the mistress of the castle entertain them; for straitway did she command that
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the great hall should be made ready, and the joyous musicians invited.

And now twice fifty waxen tapers blazed within the hall, and shed a delicious odour around them. Each gallant knight and squire selected a fair lady: King Richard obtained the hand of the Lady Carolinetta: the vaulted roofs resounded with the dance and merry minstrelsy.

And here, virtuous Reader, the inviolable truth of history compels me to declare, that there was a very great variety of good and bad dancing. For the Lady Carolinetta, albeit a pretty figure, was not yet in possession of that elegance and ease which are indispensably requisite to perfection in this exercise. Her performances, however, were in no wise disapproved; she hopping and tripping
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with a timidity not unpleasing. Nor is it to be passed over in silence, that this love-inspiring damsel, notwithstanding her august genealogy (sole heiress she of the Count of Verrenburgen), would, when she had danced down the line at any public festivity, stand courteously at the bottom, until the rest, who had contributed their quota to the pleasure, had each in due turn enjoyed the like diversion; in this scorning to imitate divers damsels of condition, who, after that they have disdainfully twirled those below them, race impudently and unjustly away, and leave those despised and disappointed couples to look gravely, or foolishly, at one another. Now the Lady Carolinetta had a soul above this. Nay, even had she been inclined to such unpardonable discourtesy, the Lady Urfulina would have lectured her severely;

verely; for this relict, though vain in certain dismal articles, possessed an honest mind, and could give direction to her juniors.

It now waxed late, and the several knights and squires, with their respective dames and damsels, departed from the castle, well delighted with their entertainment; each warrior having first assured the Lady Ursulina, that he would exercise the vigour of his arm for her protection.

This done, they re-embarked; the Lady Ursulina exhorting every female to muffle herself comfortably, in her passing over the lake.

As for the guests who remained, they retired each to a chamber, there to com-
mit

mit their senses to the custody of sleep. But not so the Lady of the Castle: cares of a rueful nature still occupied her soul. Accordingly Jeronimo, her wife and faithful usher, was summoned into her presence, and enjoined to expedite whatsoever was yet undone, that in any wise related to the perfection of her widowed dignity. Jeronimo at once applauded and obeyed, and, ere three days were ended, a fable collar was provided for the house-dog, fable saddle-cloths were put on all the palfreys, fable marks were scored upon the sheep, and the very horns of the oxen and of the kine painted fable.

Nor was the diligence of the usher less distinguished within doors: for the side-board was covered with a piece of black baize; black fringe was added
to

to the table-cloths and napkins; and a cushion of black hair-cloth was laid in the great hall, for those entering from the court-yard to purify their shoes on. Such were the new arrangements at the Castle of the Lake.

C H A P. VI.

NOR were the poor on this occasion forgotten; for the Lady Urfulina was much addicted to charity. Much had she often bestowed in an occult and judicious manner: much did she now dispose of with some tincture of ostentation. For, lo! on a day appointed, the indigent and infirm, from every village round about, were assembled in the court-yard of the castle, and got broth in black porringers according to seniority. Nor were the external comforts of the body overlooked: for to every man was given a good vestment of black frieze, and likewise a pair of black breeches; to every female also, a black petticoat of serge, together with a kerchief of the same solemn colour. This done, they were dismissed, with an earnest

earnest charge to pray for the soul of the memorable Sir Lodowick.

The tidings of these affairs were now reported far and near, and numbers, great numbers, set out from distant places, to behold the till now unheard-of lamentation of this paragon of virtuous viduity. But, ere they passed the lake, Jeronimo, at the head of the retainers of the Lady Urfulina, made a rigorous scrutiny of all who had arrived, lest amongst them the indefatigable Sir Leopold should be hidden. Nevertheless a crimson damask, from this designing suitor, had nearly effected an entrance into the castle, enclosed in the belly of a wild boar, which was said to have been killed at a hunting in some forest, and sent in the name of a good squire of these parts, as a present to the Lady Urfulina.

But the penetrating soul of Jeronimo (an Italian by birth, and therefore the more suspecting) misgave him that some fraudulency lurked beneath this offering. He, ever solicitous for the welfare of his lady, took notice of an uncommon distension in the body of this wild boar; and, forthwith flitting it open, discovered therein a very excellent piece of damask (it had been rolled on a round stick, well wrapped in paper, and thrust down the gullet of the boar), together with a trimming on a new construction; a trimming which, had the relict of Sir Lodowick beheld it, would have gone near to shake, once again, her resolutions, and cause the pomp of widowhood to vanish, as it were a dream.

The indignant Jeronimo, who had been already invested with full powers by his lady, to act in all affairs which
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had relation to her woe, in such manner as he himself should deem conducive to her glory, commanded the said damask, with all its alluring furniture, to be thrown before his face into the lake, where it sunk, in a few moments, many fathoms beyond the reach either of avarice or curiosity. The boar was roasted whole, and distributed, the ensuing Sunday, to the poor, upon black trenchers.

But it is now time to return to the guests within the castle, more particularly to the hero whose adventures and exploits are the subject of this history.

No sooner had the radiance of the orient sun illumined the proud chambers of the Castle of the Lake, than the unhappy *Man of the Face* abandoned his bed of down, to resume his diurnal travel. Nor was it long until the high-

descended *Cœur-de-Lion* forth issued from his apartment, and repaired to the garden of the castle, to inhale the healthy breeze of the morning.

Now it happened, but a little while before, that the youthful Carolinetta had set open the casement of her chamber, and seated herself thereat, with the intention to employ those pleasant hours in sewing, till the bell should summon her to breakfast. Nature, you are to know, benignant reader, had bestowed upon this damsel a voice, which, for clearness and suavity, might have vied with the music of the nightingale. She raised the tender song: her carolling caught the ear of King Richard. He paused upon the terrace: he listened with delight to the lay; then slowly and silently directed his steps to that part of the garden whence the sound seemed to
issue,

issue, and there beheld the lovely Carolinetta, sweetly warbling and working in the window of her apartment. From this, as from a gorgeous balcony, she could view, not the garden alone, but likewise the lake, and the rich and smiling landscape of a wide-extended country, embellished with the turrets of majestic castles, and with the steeples of venerable churches, soaring at various distances above the woods.

No sooner had she ceased the song, than the captivated *Cœur-de-Lion* approached beneath the window, and accosted the fair songstress as follows:—
 “ Be not offended, industrious and tune-ful lady, that I, who have lent mine ears with admiration to your strain, now advance to behold the ambrosial lips from which such heart-delighting melody hath proceeded. It is with rap-

ture, illustrious lady, that I survey these nimble fingers (which rival the whiteness of Barbaric ivory) thus plying the labours of the needle, at this so early hour, when many a damsel, peradventure, is either sunk in soft repose, and dreaming of tournaments and gay attire, or awake, and pondering on things marvellous in their nature. And let not, I beseech you, these expressions of mine, which truth and satisfaction dictate, interrupt your goodly task (if task indeed it be, and not rather a recreation to your spotless mind); for I, O incomparable lady! am able from this verdant lawn to gaze upwards at your beauty, and pour out the language of love, you plying, in the mean while, the labours of the needle. Very far be it from me to become the cause of idleness in any damsel living, but more especially in her for whom my enthralled heart now burns
with

with an ardour triumphant and irresistible. Recollect, illustrious lady, the bright models of your sex, who have shone in ancient ages, and whose works, yet preserved in divers august families, are a splendid and unperishing memorial of their accomplishments; recollect, I say, those matrons, and those maidens, and encourage in your youthful bosom an ambition to excel them. So shall the fair fame of your deserts be transmitted to centuries unborn, and your name quoted with reverence to each rising generation. Sew on, love-inspiring lady, sew on, captivating virgin; and if, at certain intervals, you withdraw your brilliant eyes from that which now exercises your hands and your attention, vouchsafe to bestow a look upon a much-enamoured knight, who considers you as the paragon of terrestrial perfection."

So spake King Richard : to whom the innocent god-daughter of the Lady Ursulina :—" Most truly thankful am I, benevolent and courteous knight, for these so noble praises (alas! how little merited!) with which you have adorned me, a simple, but harmless damsel. Very many of my sex employ the labour and art of others to contrive, compose, and alter, and repair their apparel ; whereas, I, intrepid knight, have been instructed from my childish days to perform divers works appertaining to the female state, to the end that the dire evil of idleness betray not my youthful and inexperienced mind to matters ill according with my sex and with my safety. Nor is it inconsistent with the illustrious state of life in which it hath pleased heaven to place me, that I exercise these arts which are generally deemed ignoble ; seeing that, in the
Eastern

Eastern nations (as pilgrims and merchant travellers relate) the Mahometan Emperors are taught, in their tender years, some trade, or handicraft, whereby, when afterwards exalted to the throne, they may amuse their thoughts, nor spend their precious time unprofitably. Marvel not, therefore, magnanimous and worthy Sir, that I, at this early hour, should arise to sew and warble; inasmuch as hilarity is the foundation of health, and health of those attractions which win the praise and love of the courteous, the knightly, and the brave."

She said; and the King of England thus replied:—"I vow to the faints of Paradise, inestimable damsel, that this wisdom becometh you highly; and fortunate do I pronounce your excellent and dolorous godmother, in the society
of

of a damsel so sagacious, and yet so merry."

He ended; and the Lady Carolinetta, without suspending her employment, replied in the following terms.—“ But, Sir Knight, you are about to overturn that very wisdom, which you insist I possess, by the applauses which you are pleased to bestow on me. Consider, I beseech you, that I am but a female, and that few of my sex are well able to withstand flattery. What if I become vain and haughty, and scornful of knights and barons? Would you not then despise me?”

“ Holy Paul!” exclaimed the King of England, “ this is yet more admirable!—She who hath the sense to be diffident of her own doings, is, as God shall save me, a woman of true wisdom.”

But,

"But, alas!" said the Lady Carolinetta, "this wisdom which you thus admire is merely what I have learnt from the Lady Ursulina: it is but at second hand. I am, as yet, too youthful to boast any of mine own."

"If I am astonished by your understanding," replied the royal hero, "I am likewise enchanted by your exemplary modesty. Nevertheless, illustrious lady, in sending up these encomiums on your earliness and industry, I am acting the part of an enemy to myself: for idleness we know to be the nurse of love, (now I wish you most heartily to love me); and lying long a-bed, I believe, disposes the mind to meditate on love and lovers."

Here the Lady Carolinetta laid down her thread and needle, and, laughing, discovered

discovered those incomparable teeth of which we have made mention in a foregoing chapter. And now this delicious colloquy, so worthy of being recorded, would have taken, without doubt, a most tender and pathetic turn (particularly on the part of the much-enamoured *Cœur-de-Lion*), had not the castle-bell been rung vigorously for breakfast. In the gallant days of chivalry they breakfasted betimes.

C H A P. VII.

BREAKFAST, which had consisted of invigorating viands, being at length concluded, the Lady Urfulina most courteously proposed some recreation on the lake: whereupon her black boat was made ready. The lake was, at this time, in the perfection of its beauty; for Autumn spread his mellow tints upon the foliage of the innumerable trees, whose reverend branches bowed down upon the water from the verdant banks with which it was environed. Moreover divers shrubs, dispersed upon the island on which the castle stood, and likewise intermingling with the groves upon the margin, now displayed, as if with emulation, their bright and clustering berries, the purple, the scarlet, the pale red, the yellow, and many other

other hues which are wont, at that delicious season, to ornament and enrich the scenery of nature.

And now the King of England, with a careful hand, conducted the Lady Ursulina and her adorable god-daughter to the edge of this beauteous basin, where with equal assiduity he assisted them in embarking. The relict of Sir Lodowick stepped first, King Richard holding her arm, and decorously and considerately turning aside his face, lest the legs of the Lady Ursulina should peradventure be discovered whilst she strode over the gunnel of the wherry. As for the Lady Carolinetta, he clasped her round the waist, the very slender waist, and having hoisted her on high, soon deposited her safely by the side of her good god-mother.

At

At length this august company being seated in the boat, beneath a mournful tilt of black canvas ; the rowers, solemn persons, arrayed in sable trowsers, uplifted their black oars, then, dipping them with one accord, caused the vessel to move swiftly from the shore. The minstrel Fitzherbert, at the instance of the King of England, tuned his harp, and made the neighbouring woods re-echo with his melody.

Meanwhile the wherry advanced across the lake. The nets were thrown out, and the inhabitants of the water betrayed into captivity. At length the Lady Ursulina, whose sight was very strong, descried something at a distance which floated upon the surface. She commanded her boatmen to row in that direction : as they approached, the thing appeared to be a wooden box, or coffer.

At

At the desire of the Lady Ursulina it was taken into the boat. It was not weighty; but was closed by a brazen lock, which with difficulty they forced open. The King of England examined its contents: they consisted of a small roll of parchment, which was covered on both sides with writing, and of the portrait in miniature of a damsel. Notwithstanding that this picture had been damaged by the water, the ladies and King Richard could readily perceive, that it had been drawn for a beautiful woman.

With regard to the little volume, they found, upon perusing a few lines of it, that it was the history of some person who had been possessor of the miniature. By what accident the coffer had come thither, the company were at a loss to divine. "But it is not unlikely," observed

observed the King of England, "that this volume may throw a light upon the matter, and explain to us whose lineaments this picture represents."

Curiosity inflamed the Lady Ursulina and her god-daughter. The nets, at their command, were hauled in; and the wherry, impelled by the exertions of the rowers, soon arrived at the island of the castle. The coffer was delivered into the hands of Jeronimo, who conducted the Lady Ursulina and her guests to an apartment, where Fitzherbert unrolled the volume, and, having inspected the title, pronounced it to be *The History of Voltello*: whereupon the King of England urged the minstrel to recite it; for such, he said, was the desire of the two noble ladies.

Fitzherbert acquiesced. His high-born auditors were seated in a circle (the respectful Jeronimo retiring to a corner); the Lady Carolinetta resumed her sewing; and the relict of Sir Lodowick drew forth, from her black bag, the black dotting which had amused her whilst she journeyed through the forest. Thus employed, they listened to the history of Voltello, which the minstrel recited as follows:—"Stranger, whoever thou art, that shalt one day be possessed of this volume, consider well the fate of him who writes it, and profit, if thou canst, by his example. I am the *Anchorite of the Rocks*, and dwell upon the bank of that translucent flood which unites with a nobler water near the Castle of the Lake. In my earlier days I was known by the title of the Count Voltello, and inhabited Palermo, a renowned city of Sicily. My domains
were

were extensive, but ill acquired; my lineage elevated, but despised; my life active, but flagitious. I am now an old man, and a fugitive from society. I have not long to exist; therefore do I write unreservedly, and picture my depravity with the pencil of truth.

“ I came into the world with contempt upon my head. The citizens of Palermo pronounced that nothing good could derive its original from the house of Voltello; for wickedness, in our family, was considered as hereditary. I will not trouble thee, stranger, with the execrable achievements that distinguished my prime (they answered, to the full, the inauspicious expectations of the people of Palermo), but will confine myself to the relation of one exploit alone, for which I have abandoned my native city, and fought, in the German

forests, a concealment from human kind.

“ The deed which I allude to crowned all my crimes : it was my last, worst outrage ; it was supereminently villainous. But, before I touch upon it, I must here inform thee, that, notwithstanding my accursed character, notwithstanding the diabolical catalogue of my actions, without one single virtue even to vary the black multitude, though the Barons of my house had been caitiffs upon record through successive generations, a lady, the most beautiful and accomplished in all Palermo, gave her hand to me in marriage, preferring me to numerous adorers, amongst whom, alas ! I was not worthy to be named.

“ But such is the way of women. Good heavens ! that what was fashioned

by the hand of the Creator to be the reward and consolation of the wise and good, should so frequently become the portion of the most infamous of mankind! It is true, I had the talent of recommending myself in their eyes: I agreeably amused their fancies: in the enjoyment of my mirth, they lost sight of my iniquity. Who then, hath cause to triumph in the favour of a fine woman, when, ten times for one, the most worthless are the objects of it?" [Here the Ladies Ursulina and Carolinetta looked displeased, and tossed their heads a little, as disapproving this paragraph in the history of Voltello.]

"Many and various motives are found accessory to this preference: rank, or riches, in the suitor; the favourable contrast between his flagitiousness and her good fame (for the virtues of a husband

may eclipse the wife, and engross that admiration which she covets for herself); and the vanity of supposing that she shall, one day, effect a reformation in a man, who, until he had espoused her, was of deplorable immorality. How grossly they mistake, with respect to this last idea, I myself am a melancholy instance. These, and other reasons, (many of which are marvellous, some inscrutable, unfathomable) direct the mind of woman in the important point of matrimony.

“ Nevertheless there may exist, within the private walks of life, wise women who are not governed by the maxims I have recorded. [Here the ladies gave a nod of approbation.] This, stranger, is indeed no digression from my story, but leads me, without difficulty, to that which I proposed. Although wedded to
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so fair, so accomplished, so virtuous a lady, I relinquished not the ways of the libertine, but re-practised every art for the seduction of the innocent. Uncontented with the possession of a treasure so much envied, I often stole disguised from my palace to the brothel, where I purchased decaying beauty, and disease, and shame : I kept in constant pay those venal handmaids of vice, whose trade it is to decoy the distressed or unwary female to irretrievable infamy.

“ One day a woman, whose name was Lomelina, and whom I had frequently employed as an instrument of my pleasures, informed me that she had made acquaintance with a damsel of uncommon beauty, whom she had endeavoured, by her usual arts, to inveigle, but in vain ; that, if I wished to gain possession of this prize, she would con-

trive

trive to procure me an interview with her, and leave me to employ my known talents for seduction, in the hope that my exertions might prove more happy than her own.

“Inflamed by the description which Lomelina had given me of this extraordinary but obdurate fair one, and even stimulated by the prospect of the difficulties in my way, which I was vain enough to think I should not fail of overcoming, I repaired at an appointed hour to Lomelina. Soon after, she conducted me to the house of a female friend, whither the damsel and her parents, who were of mean condition, had been invited to make merry. I was introduced to them as a knight lately returned from the Holy Land. Lomelina did not appear.

“ I omitted

“ I omitted nothing on this occasion which I imagined could recommend me in the eyes of the beautiful Zarinda, for that was the name of the damsel. I mingled with the most insidious adulation, an appearance of warlike sincerity; I recounted, with all the eloquence of which I was possessed, the exploits of the Christian worthies in Palestine; described, in lively colours, the siege and capture of Jerusalem; hinted at the numerous perils which I myself had escaped; and, by affecting an extreme modesty, acquired credit for achievements which I had not achieved, and for having visited the birth-place of Jesus, though I had been never out of Sicily.

“ I had the satisfaction of perceiving that these despicable devices were not uselessly exerted on Zarinda. I renewed
them

them with additional success at various other times, when I visited her at the house of her parents, and concluded that I had now made such an impression upon her heart, as might encourage me to a declaration of my passion. The reception which it met with confirmed, in the fullest manner, the account which I had heard from Lomelina: for the damsel, though poor, and of inconsiderable parentage, was indued with the pride of virtue, and refused to receive dishonourable addresses. I, however, put in practice all those artifices in which I was so infernally skilful; I sighed, I wept, I flattered; I urged the fear of being disinherited and cast off by all my kindred, if I wedded one whose family was so unequal to mine:—in vain: discretion and purity swayed the heart of Zarinda; and all my efforts ended in the indigna-
tion

tion of the fair, and in my own disappointment and defeat.

“ I was the more chagrined at this circumstance, as, in the whole course of many years which I had spent in perfecting the art of seducing women, in all the ruin which I had brought upon the sex, this was the only instance wherein I had experienced ill fortune. But I was not to be thus disheartened: I was determined to possess Zarinda, though the victory were to be obtained by the most unutterable iniquity.

“ Had Zarinda remained ignorant of my real name and quality, I might have imposed on her by consenting to the ceremony of a marriage: but, unluckily, her parents had discovered, that I was no other than the Count Voltello, who, it was well known in Palermo, had been
many

many years espoused to a beautiful and accomplished woman. Yet, beautiful and accomplished as this woman was, possession had now rendered me indifferent to her charms; and, with respect to her virtues, I was too vile a libertine to be sensible of their value. Add to this, that even those sentiments which her attractions had inspired, were now extruded from my heart by my devotion to another object. In a word, I was weary of this lovely woman, who, unfortunately for herself, had bestowed her heart on me, in preference to my many rivals, who had deserved it so much better.

“ My passion for Zarinda was augmented daily, by the very obstacles which forbade me to indulge it. My indifference to the Countess assumed a bolder hue, and rose to an invincible aversion.

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I acquainted Lemelina with my disquietude, and besought her to assist me in devising some quick remedy. It was evident to us both, that I had already won so far upon the affections of Zarrinda, that, were I single, she would accept me for her husband with joy; but it was equally evident, that so stubborn were her notions of rectitude, that nothing short of the solemn tie of marriage could obtain her.

“ Here then our deliberations were at a stand. We looked at each other in silence. At length I thought I perceived in the countenance of Lemelina, a something that was significant, atrocious, diabolical. I understood her meaning—The hearts of the wicked are in unison—It was sufficient. I determined to rid myself, without delay, of the only bar between me and the possession of Zarrinda.

rinda. The murder of the Countess was resolved on, and Lomelina undertook to be the perpetrator of the deed. To wind up my ingratitude and villainy to the highest pitch, and that nothing might be wanting to render me a monster detestable to earth and heaven, we chose for this horrid deed a juncture, when, if any thing could have softened such a bosom as mine, there existed not only cause for commiseration and remorse, but even for a revival of affection.

“ My wife was at this time upon the eve of child-birth. It was agreed, therefore, that Lomelina should be introduced into my family, as an experienced person to attend upon the Countess, in a case of such emergency. The Countess soon after was delivered of a son, the fifth which she had borne me ; and joy, sincere

sincere in every face but mine, and that of the accursed Lomelina, now reigned throughout the palace of Voltello.

“Thou seest, stranger, that I am faithful to my promise; that I record my own actions in the language of execration.

“Amidst this general joy, the wicked instrument of my wickedness was not forgetful of the part which she had undertaken to perform. In the dead hour of midnight, she seized the opportunity, when the Countess had called to her for some medicine, to mingle with the potion a certain whitish powder, which is known to be a mortal poison: and this she could the more easily effect, as the rest of the nurses and attendants, overcome with watching and fatigue, had lain down to take repose in different

corners

corners of the chamber. The deed, however, (such is the justice of all-seeing Heaven) did not pass unperceived, although its nefarious tendency was unknown to the observer; for one of the damsels, less drowsy than her companions, saw Lomelina take the powder from her pocket, infuse it into the vessel, and throw the paper which had contained it, on the floor. This paper the damsel afterwards took up.

“ The murderous draught is administered:—the Countess—but I will not here repeat the particulars of this shocking tragedy. It is sufficient to relate, that, ere many minutes had passed away, that most excellent of women was no more. The deed thus perpetrated, it was given out in the palace, that the Countess had been attacked with a sudden malady in the night-time, the violence

lence of which had put a period to her life, before the necessary assistance of physicians could be procured. As for me, I laboured to appear disconsolate, and; with an air of amiable impiety, taxed Heaven with being cruel, in thus snatching from me, in the flower of her days, a consort for whom I had ever felt the tenderest affection. I had the precaution, notwithstanding, to give orders for the immediate funeral of the Countess; a command which gave birth to no little surprise, both in the palace, and throughout the neighbourhood.

“ Meanwhile the damsel already mentioned, disclosed to the domestics what she had been witness to with respect to the powder, and likewise produced the paper in which it had been contained. This paper was instantly shewn to a person much noted for his skill in drugs, who, from the smell, and more especially

cially from certain particles still adhering to the paper, pronounced the powder to be a quick and subtle poison. The grief and rage of my domestics (who had adored their deceased lady) were undescrivable: they made search after the infamous Lomelina, and dragged her to the public prison. The body of the Countess was opened, and undeniable symptoms of poison were discovered in the intestines,

“ And now suspicion began to glance even at me. My precipitate directions for solemnizing the funeral; my having introduced Lomelina into the family, expressly for the purpose of officiating as a nurse; and, more than all, my known aversion for the Countess; confirmed the friends and kindred of that unfortunate lady in their belief that I had been privy to the guilt of Lomelina.

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This last was soon after brought to trial; but, faithful to her agreement with me, and relying on the weight and interest of my family for her safety, refused to divulge to her judges, and to the world, that I had been the instigator of the crime which she had committed. As the evidence against her was clear and incontestable, she was condemned to suffer death, to the infinite satisfaction of the citizens of Palermo.

“ You will readily imagine, stranger, that I omitted not to exert my utmost power and influence in behalf of this abominable woman. As I was allied to the august house which then swayed the Sicilian sceptre, I found no difficulty in procuring a pardon for Lomelina [Here the King of England started from his seat, and, frowning, grasped a battle-axe, which lay along the mantle-piece;

but the Lady Carolinetta plucking him by the cloak, he craved pardon of the illustrious females for the sudden transport wherewith he had been seized, and resumed his seat very peaceably]; though, at the same time, the most violent suspicions prevailed against myself, in Palermo, and throughout all Sicily; as well from the uniform profligacy of my life, as from my solicitude to shelter from the just vengeance of the laws so obnoxious and atrocious a criminal.

“ After wearing for the usual time, with the most detestable hypocrisy, the exterior marks of sadness for the death of the murdered Countess, I espoused Zarinda, for whose sake I had been thus a villain, and who, notwithstanding the suspicions against me, believed, or affected to believe, the tale which I propagated with respect to the death of the Countess.

Countess. Thus, either from love, or from ambition, or from both, she unreluctantly surrendered up her charms to my possession.

“ But though the wicked Lomelina had been snatched from the executioner, her crime had made too forcible an impression on the minds of men, to be suffered soon to pass into oblivion. Though royalty had forgiven it, the nation had not.

“ Whenever I appeared abroad, the populace reviled me with the most mortifying epithets; each street resounded with the curses they bestowed on me; nor did they even spare my children and my wife, but hissed them, and spit on them, as they passed along, and failed not to reproach them with the hereditary turpitude of the house of Voltello.

“ These reiterated affronts, this universal dereliction, embittered the life of my Zarinda ; they preyed upon her heart ; and, ere long, delivered her to the dominion of death. I have enclosed a little portrait of that beautiful, but hapless lady, in the coffer which is destined to contain this history. It hath afforded me, in my retreat, a kind of gloomy recreation to contemplate the image of those heavenly charms, that were snatched from an admiring world to an untimely grave ; a fate which she owed to her being united to a wretch so despised, so abhorred for his unutterable depravity.

“ At length, afflicted for the loss of her I loved, harassed by the unceasing invectives of the Sicilians, and even in apprehension for the safety of my person, I adopted the resolution to depart,
and

and devote the remnant of my remorseful days to solitude in some region far remote from Sicily. Pursuant to this determination, I distributed my children amongst their uncles and their aunts, and, having bidden them an affectionate farewell, took shipping from Palermo in the dead of night (for the populace had threatened to stone me), and sailed for the city of Marseilles. I travelled thence into Germany, and, having wandered for a considerable period of time, in quest of a convenient cavern, at length fixed my abode beneath the venerable rocks which overhang the margin of a smooth and limpid river, in the neighbourhood of the Castle of the Lake.”

—Here ended the history of Voltello.

C H A P. VIII.

THE Ladies Urfulina and Carolinetta most courteously thanked the minstrel for his trouble; the King of England swore by the head of holy Dominick, that, had he been in possession of the throne of Sicily, Lomelina should have suffered condign punishment.

And here it is to be noted, that the Lady Urfulina, a woman of a devout tendency, was at divers times dissatisfied with the exclamations of King Richard, in which the names of the Apostles, and other blessed people, were vainly and profanely introduced; a circumstance which caused that virtuous relict ever and anon to turn her eyes upwards, and also shrug her shoulders in silent amaze and horror.

One

One day (for I will digress a little, while upon this topic), as she and the heroic *Cœur-de-Lion* were sitting by the fire-side, she informed him in a mild voice, that she had somewhat of magnitude to impart to him. The King of England, who supposed for certain, that the relict of Sir Lodowick had a boon to crave, and doubtless meant to employ the vigour of his valiant arm in some chivalrous achievement, drew nearer to her corner, and disposed himself to listen to her desire. Whereupon the Lady Ursulina accosted him in these words: —“ It is with pity und displeasure, illustrious Knight, that I have long observed, in one of your noble and rare qualities, a most vehement inclination to swearing. Without doubt, continued she, it was less from choice than custom that you have made this terrifying progress in profaneness. I am grieved, nay
I am

I am shocked at the reiterated offences of this kind which you commit, and conjure you to forego the irreligious habitude. Lo! the impudent Sir Leopold, who annoys me with his addresses, and persecutes me with fashionable raiment, knowing my just abhorrence of rash and frequent swearing, placed a guard upon his lips in my presence, nor ever uttered an oath, except a few that were too feeble to offend even in a monastery."

She said; and the King of England, who was clearly satisfied of the justness of her sentiments, but loved nevertheless to divert himself with her humour, replied to the Lady Ursulina as follows: "—By the beard of St. Catherine, illustrious and pious lady, [Here the relict of Sir Lodowick uplifted both her hands] I can see but little mischief in that

that of which you complain. I am not the manner of man that would afflict your virtuous ears with aught that was, truly speaking, either immoral or unsalutary. For know, religious relict, that swearing is a matter of more importance than you are well aware of. The strenuous Christian swears to evince that he is a Christian. [Here a shrug from the Lady Ursulina.] He doeth honour to the saints, by ever and anon reminding us of their sanctity in this world, and of their interest in the next. Blessed Gregory! how many foolish and inconsiderate persons would utterly forget that there were any saints in Heaven, were it not for the exertions of the diligent and hearty swearer! [Here a second shrug from the Lady Ursulina.] By the bones of holy Nicholas, I can see no mischief in it. As for me, I was indulged in swearing from my childhood [Here the

Lady

Lady Ursulina turned up her eyes], and have ever since been noted for many pleasing imprecations. Nevertheless, austere and exemplary lady, I would endeavour (by the eyebrows of Saint Winifred I would) to debar myself of so useful an auxiliary, as an oath is now and then, were it only to give pleasure to a widow of your high worth, and most delicate turn of conscience."

So spake King Richard. To whom the relict of Sir Lodowick:—"How an oath, illustrious warrior, can in any wise be useful, unless upon solemn occasions, is, I confess, to me a matter of much surprise. [Here a dialogue ensued with such incredible velocity, that the pen of the historian, in order to keep pace with it, is constrained to omit naming the characters, as they spoke, but leaves that particular to the shrewd and discerning

discerning reader.] On the contrary, Sir Knight, continued the Lady Ursulina, it is a foul disfigurement of Christian civility."

" By the battlements of Jerusaleme, I can see no harm in swearing."

' It shocks the ears of the devout.'

" It reminds the wicked of their religion."

' It debases heroic language.'

" It invigorates discourse."

' It is a clog to colloquial intercourse.'

" It is the great wheel of conversation."

' The refuge of the illiterate.'

" The privilege of the high-born."

' A grand scandal to the church.'

" A

"A grand comfort to the laity."

'A stamp of vulgar station.'

"An evidence of nobility."

'Woe to ye hereafter!'

"Not a faint but will forgive us."

'I would willingly know why.'

"Because we swear by them, for their credit and their glory. Were you a faint yourself, you would like to be remembered; ay, marry would you."

'It is a mean sort of thing.'

"It breathes an air of bravery."

'I utterly deny that.'

"Body of Saint Benedict! Lady widow, what would you have? Nevertheless, (to speak like a courteous kind of person) I vow to blessed Margery, I will
not

not swear an oath (at least a loud one) in your noble and godly presence, while I sojourn at this castle, albeit the custom is engrafted in my constitution, and my very organs of utterance are, in a manner, formed for swearing; but, on the contrary will, when I perceive an oath intrude itself into what I am about to say, swear it softly to myself, and give you, august lady, the remainder as it ought to be."

So spake King Richard; and the Lady Urfulina, stroaking her black cat, which purred beside her, shewed symptoms of being satisfied with this knightly declaration. But it is time, patient reader, to return to the subject from which we have digressed.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

VOLTELLO, *the Anchorer of the Rocks*, having described his habitation to be situated in the neighbourhood of the Castle of the Lake, the Lady Ursulina dispatched the wise Jeronimo to enquire amongst the peasantry with regard to that lonely person, and procure, if possible, an interview with him. The venerable usher was diligent in his search, and at length arrived at a remote and wretched cottage, not far from the river already mentioned in this history. Its inhabitants informed him that they had frequently seen the person of whom he was in quest, but that, alas ! he was now no more. A violent fall of rain having swelled the neighbouring torrents, the river rose with the augmentation of its waters,

waters, overflowed its boundaries in the dead of night, burst into the cavern of the unhappy hermit, and destroyed him. His body, added they, was found floating on the stream, as soon as day appeared, together with certain articles, of which the furniture of his habitation had been composed. They concluded with declaring, that the deceased had never seemed to be, in truth, a holy person; and that in his looks there was an air of villany, which had deterred the country people from applying to him for his prayers, or for any spiritual consolation.

With this intelligence Jeronimo returned. His relation accounted satisfactorily for the coffer, and for the writing and the picture contained within it. Very many reflections were made by the august company, with respect to the fate

of Voltello; and the Lady Urfulina uttered divers moral notions, which, it is heartily to be lamented, the limits of this narration will not suffer me to record.

Many hospitable and joyous days did the magnanimous King of England experience at the Castle of the Lake. At length the minstrel Fitzherbert, alarmed for the glory of his lord, and anxious to behold him upon the throne of his progenitors, accosted him one evening as follows: "Unconquerable sovereign of a wise and warlike nation, why delay to continue your travel, and rejoice the eyes and hearts of your impatient people with the presence of their long-lost Richard? Doth it beseem the heroic *Cœur-de-Lion* to waste, amidst the forests of Germany (Germany, where you have suffered such indignity, such woe), those
 inestimable

ineffimable hours which the duties of his royal post, and the disorders of a kingless empire, now with urgency demand? Recollect, illustrious hero, the renown which you have gathered in the blessed land of Palestine, those triumphs that were the fruit of your wisdom and intrepidity; and return, while yet you may, to a loyal and admiring kingdom, to enjoy undisturbed the celebrity of your victories. Methinks I see the shade of your father Henry arise; methinks I hear the echo of his lordly voice, reminding you of the rich and wide-extended realms which, in death, he surrendered to your rule and conservation, and exhorting you to uphold the fame of the royal house of the Plantagenets. Let us then depart, O king, without delay, and pursue the nearest road to the borders of the ocean. The Lady Ursulina is safe within these walls;

neither the arts nor the violence of Sir Leopold can reach her; she may dispense with that knightly care which you have consented to bestow on her."

Fitzherbert thus said; and the Monarch, having mused for some moments, replied to him, in these expressions:—
 "Minstrel, the care of England is ever next my heart. That I have tarried awhile in this castle, was a courtesy due to the doleful relict of Sir Lodowick, whose usher (and indeed herself) implored me to befriend her with the vigour of my arm, in her present dangerous condition; not to mention that the attractions of her incomparable god-daughter have acquired that sweet sway over my ill-defended heart, which beauty and pleasantness are accustomed to maintain over the knightly and courteous-minded, at all seasons, and in all places.
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Nevertheless, Fitzherbert, since thy words are fraught with sincerity and wisdom, and my gallant people of England now languish for my return, I will at once break through those toils which love hath laid to ensnare me, and, ere another sun hath ascended to its meridian, will take leave of the Lady Ursulina, and the adorable Carolinetta,"

So spake King Richard. Fitzherbert, full of joy, repaired speedily to the stable, with intent to crop and rectify the courser of the King, and his own accomplished palfrey. Moreover, he caused the royal armour to be scoured.

And now night had with her solemn government succeeded the departed day, and preparation was made in the hall for the final repast which King Richard and the minstrel were to enjoy at the

Castle of the Lake. Ere long, the viands smoked upon the table. The relict of Sir Lodowick, and the lady Carolinetta, demeaned themselves with their wonted affability. Much witty discourse went round. At length, the viands being removed, and the bowls of choicest beverage filled up to their silver margins, and handed to the Lady Ursulina and her inestimable god-daughter, who neatly and discretely sipped as much as seemed becoming them, the Monarch of England accosted in these words his grave and attentive hostess: "Many and great kindneses, hospitable and noble lady, have the minstrel and myself received in this your castle: never, while the breath of life inspirits this mortal frame, shall they be excluded from my memory. Nevertheless, illustrious lady, since your audacious persecutor is effectually defeated, as well by the

the wisdom and fidelity of your usher, as by the force and situation of the fortress in which you dwell, esteem it not unknighly if now I crave your permission, lady, to depart, and exercise my sword where peradventure it may be needful. Various, and perilous, and urgent, and sublime, are the calls and occasions of chivalry. Iniquity now stalks, like a giantess, upon earth: she treads down the poor and the feeble: the valorous and the strong are their sole succour and consolation. I vow to the —

[Here King Richard, forgetful of his recent promise, was about to violate devotion; but, on a sudden, recollecting himself, suppressed the rising oath.] I say, courteous and incomparable lady, that the vigour of my arm is very necessary to the miserable, and therefore pray your leave to resume my purposed

travel. And you, celestial paragon of innocence and beauty [continued the heroic Richard, addressing the Lady Carolinetta], consider not this departure as a violation of that love with which your worth and beauty have so occupied my heart ; but esteem it, I beseech you, as redounding to your glory ; inasmuch as, peerless virgin, every victory I may win must be ascribed to the dear influence of your attractions, and compose so many monuments to your merit and my fidelity. This arm is to be the pillar of your fame. Therefore, celestial lady, believe me your unaltered knight, nor view with offended eyes my departure from this castle. Idleness is the bane of knighthood and of renown ; and honour, once debased, can never more remount to its original sublimity.

So

So spake the King of England. A smile and a blush together adorned the face of the lovely Carolinetta, whilst the Lady Urfulina, in a brief and benignant manner, thus replied to the petition of her royal guest:—"Now far be it from me, most courteous and gallant Knight, to detain your valorous arm from the field of great adventure. Go; and may the high Heavens prove propitious to your chivalry!" She said, and, having plucked off from her finger a jewel of grand price, presented it to *Cœur-de-Lion*, as a memorial of her gratitude; then, rising, bade him farewell, and retired amidst her damsels.

Nor was the gentle Carolinetta disinclined to imitate the example of her grateful godmother, but drew from her hand a glove, the whiteness of which,
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the hue of that hand alone could emulate; this, embellished with a golden fringe, she gave to the enamoured Richard; then dropped a crystal tear, and departed to her bed-chamber.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

THE sun, on the ensuing morn, had scarce lifted his resplendent orb above the eastern horizon, when Fitzherbert roused his sovereign to leave the Castle of the Lake. Arlino snorted, and shook his mane for joy; the minstrel bestrode his palfrey. Having crossed the expanse of water in the wherry of the Lady Ursulina, they directed their coursers towards the kingdom of Bohemia. Far they had not journeyed, when they descried a tall knight, behind whom rode a squire who was considerably short of stature. The minstrel advanced, and enquired of him the name of his lord. "The warrior whom I serve," replied the squire of little stature, "is entitled Sir Rodolpho, or *the Knight of the Pitcher*;

Pitcher; the form of which utensil is emblazoned on his target."

By this time the King of England had come near enough to salute Sir Rodolpho, which courtesy the latter returned with a graceful and gallant demeanour. As they travelled in the same direction, they joined company at the request of King Richard, who, ill able to subdue his curiosity to learn why Sir Rodolpho was entitled *the Knight of the Pitcher*, and also why he was attended by a squire of such brief stature, took occasion, when they had discoursed for a little while on chivalry, to beseech him to unfold the motives of these extraordinary particulars.

Rodolpho, who delighted in acts of courtesy, and was moreover of a communicative temper, refrained his courser
to

to an easy trot, and addressed the King of England as follows:—"Many, Sir Knight, like you, have marvelled at the disparity between my squire and myself. It hath not always been my custom to entertain in my service a person so diminutive in stature. Few knights, in the kingdom of Bohemia, have been attended by taller squires. But know, Sir, that they proved to be such a nuisance, and such an expence, that my revenue, which is moderate, became unequal to the burthen. As I myself am tall, these squires, of whom I complain, made no scruple to wear either my armour or my apparel, whensoever I was absent, and sometimes even when I was at home. Arrayed in my best garment, or in my best coat of mail, my squire, in the dusk of evening, would issue forth from my castle, to some rendezvous of damsels and petty people in
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the neighbourhood: there, within some barn, or in the recesses of some thicket, did he tilt for the love of doxies, and preposterously aspire to imitate the sublimities of chivalry. And doubtless, Sir Knight, the squires of divers other personages were guilty of the like depravity. Every month had I to purchase a new morion, or a new target; the cunning varlets insisting that it had been battered upon myself, in this or that encounter, with such or such a knight, in certain dreadful forests, or at the last gorgeous tournament in which I had been a champion. In fine, my fairest habergeons were scratched and rendered shameful, my doublets, hose, and breeches, destroyed without remorse.

“Whereupon, Sir, I determined, as my only defence against this species of maltreatment, to be provided ever after with
a squire

a squire whose dimensions should be dissimilar to mine, and whom, therefore, neither my armour nor my habiliments would fit. And now, thanks to this device, I enjoy the just use and satisfaction of my wearables.

“ With respect to the armorial ensign which is emblazoned upon my target, and from which I have received the addition of *Knight of the Pitcher*, the occasion, Sir Knight, was as follows:— One day, as I pursued my journey through a deep and gloomy hollow, in quest of brave adventures, mine ears were of a sudden assailed by a most singular and doleful sound, which proceeded from a castle on the brow of an impending cliff, that formed one of the sides of the hollow. I pause, I listen, I dismount from my steed, and commit him to the care of my squire; then, climb-

climbing the rude cliff, endeavour to reach the castle. I succeeded in the attempt, and placed myself under the casement of a chamber from which the strange sound seemed to issue.

“ As, ever and anon, there came an interval of silence, I seized the opportunity, and elevating my voice, enquired if any persons much afflicted were in the chamber; for that I, as was the duty of a genuine son of chivalry, stood ready to assist and console them. Whereupon (O wonderful!) a voice, as if proceeding from the inside of a pitcher, in a mournful key replied me in the following expressions:—‘ Kind stranger, for the love of the Virgin, go round to the castle gate, which I know you will find open; and proceed through the great hall to a narrow passage on the left, which will lead you to a flight of steps,

steps, up which, for the sake of heaven, ascend; those past, turn a little to the right, where a gallery somewhat dismal will conduct you to this apartment. Be speedy, benignant stranger; for I am verily in great misery. Here the voice, with a piteous groan, concluded.

“ I obeyed my distressed director, and, after various turnings and windings, arrived at a remote chamber. The door stood wide open: I entered, and, to my utter astonishment, beheld a middle-aged man (who, from his vestments, appeared to be a person of high condition) bent down upon a large table, with his head, to the very shoulders, enclosed in an earthen pitcher, through the sides of which his voice produced a miserable and odd sound. But, irksome as his plight must have been, and strong as my desire was to release him, I was

VOL. I.

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nevertheless so struck with the novelty of the spectacle, that I remained for some minutes without motion; then gave a loose to laughter, irresistible and excessive.

“ At length, roused by the reiterated lamentations of the sufferer, I advanced up to the table, and, with the handle of my battle-axe, gently smote the vessel, which incontinently fell to pieces. The person who had been thus tormented, started up in a transport of delight, and thanked me in courteous terms for having effected his deliverance. In return, I asked him by what means he had been betrayed into a situation so ludicrous and extraordinary; whether by the power of enchantment, or by the villainy of his domestics, or, in fine, by the devices of some vindictive enemy.

enemy. At the same time I struggled to overcome my rising laughter, lest the effusions of my merriment should further disconcert the already chagrined sufferer, who, having shed a few tears, and sobbed, fate down, and wiped his eyes, and replied to me as follows :

‘ Neither the power of enchantment, nor the villainy of domestics, nor the devices of an enemy, reduced me to the predicament out of which you have just redeemed me ; but my own unexampled folly, which hath attended me from my very youth, and which, in this particular, proved inveterate and invincible. You must know, benignant knight, that I am a baron of glorious ancestry, and addicted not a little to the love of certain sweet-meats, which those skilled in the composition of rich and rare confections, are accustomed to keep in jars,

to the end that they may remain uninjured for a long space of time, and defy the malignity of the weather. Many vessels of these junkets have I consumed, courteous stranger, since I have been in the possession of this castle; but (as my evil stars designed it, or else for some sin that I have committed) on this inauspicious day, having finished the remainder of certain preserved fruits, with which this accursed vessel, the fragments of which now lie scattered on the floor, had been filled in former years, I imagined, (wretch as I am!) that I beheld some candied substance encrusting the inside of the vessel, with here and there some sirup, which appeared so very alluring, that I felt an irresistible avidity to obtain it.

Whereupon, without delay, I thrust my head unwittingly down into the vessel,

vessel, till my lips touched the very bottom. Fool that I was, I might have scraped off, with my fingers, the sirup that was the object of my desire; but, with the voracity and nicety of an Apicius or an Heliogabalus, I dived into the vessel, conjecturing that, to lick the sides of the pitcher itself would completely enable me to acquire its contents, and even contribute to increase the delicacy of their flavour. True it is, I was gratified to the fulness of my desire: I licked both the bottom and the sides: I rioted in this cavern of sweetness.

‘ But, alas! when all was obtained, and I endeavoured to withdraw from the pitcher, I found that, in spite of every effort at extrication, my head must unavoidably continue where it lay. Had the pitcher been a light one, I could, doubtless, have freed myself from the

incumbrance at a moment, by dashing it against the wall or the table; but, to add to my distress, it happened to be a very ponderous and unwieldy piece of earthen-ware, and utterly beyond my skill or strength to overcome.

‘I now felt the horror of my situation in its full force: I roared for very vexation: but my people had gone abroad, and there was none left to relieve me. I wept, Sir Knight, till the vessel was half filled with my tears: the deep and hollow murmur of my voice affrighted me: I remained at once a ridiculous and a lamentable spectacle. At length (blessed be the Saint who sent you!) I heard your welcome summons from below, and considered my enlargement as indubitable.’

“ Here

“ Here the Baron concluded his story. We then commenced a very precious discourse concerning the moral good that might be extracted from this circumstance. We viewed it in a serious light, and looked (by way of allegory) on the pitcher, as an image of the voluptuousness of life ; and on the Baron, as a picture of ungovernable concupiscence, which, dissatisfied with a just and temperate share of pleasures, and such as are readily and comfortably to be attained, will seize them by irregular methods, will *run the head into the pitcher*, and inordinately thirst for the very dregs of enjoyment.

“ This topic disposed of, we entered into the nature of man in general ; after which, having advanced a few ideas about avarice, and the misconceived opinions with respect to earthly happiness,

we digressed, or rather made a transition to a matter, which the Baron had more nearly at heart, and which he unfolded to me as follows: ' The misfortune which I have experienced, benignant and noble knight, is of a nature indeed so comic, and yet so disagreeable, that I would bury it, if possible, in everlasting oblivion. Happily, not even my own domestics have witnessed it: none, but yourself, Sir Knight, hath been acquainted with my disgrace. Reveal not, I beseech you, my name, nor aught else that might conduce to a discovery. Relate the misadventure (it were absurd to debar you from that pleasure); but conceal the sufferer. For know, illustrious knight, that I have a kinsman, a great baron, whose possessions are rich and ample, and who, being childless, hath an intention of declaring me his successor. Nevertheless, were he to hear of this

this calamity, he would assuredly withdraw from me his favour: for he is a man of a proud mind, and could ill brook the idea, that a circumstance so ludicrous should have happened in our family.’

“So spake the Baron, whom I had liberated from the pitcher. I assured him, upon the honour of a knight, and upon the faith of a true Christian, that, however I might be tempted to relate the disaster, I would diligently conceal his name. I bade him be of good cheer, for that the secret should attend me to the grave.

“The Baron was satisfied: he embraced me with fervour, and expressed his grateful sense of my benignity, in language the most lofty and refined. We carefully collected the fragments of the pitcher, lest his people, when they returned,

turned, should be inclined to suspect what had happened. I then bade him farewell (my time not permitting me to taste of his hospitality), and descended the cliff to my squire, who was waiting with some anxiety for the issue of my adventure,

“ As I was then but young in arms, and had achieved no high exploit, from which I might adopt an armorial ensign for my target, I determined that this adventure, more laughable than illustrious, should furnish the device by which I was to be known ever after amongst the children of chivalry. For this end I halted at the nearest city, and gave a painter six florins for emblazoning on my target a pitcher *sable* in a field *or*.

“ Thus, Sir Knight, have I explained to you the two objects of your curiosity,
the

the brief stature of my attendant, and the singular device I carry."

"Body of Saint Benedict!" exclaimed the King of England, "your adventure, good Sir Knight, is without fellow in any chronicle that treats of knightly enterprize. So jocular an achievement never yet was known to mankind. Neither Rowland, nor Rinaldo, nor any one of the Peers of Charlemagne, could match it in all their chivalry. I thank you very cordially, Sir Knight, for your narration." Thus spake the royal Richard.

C H A P. XI.

THE two knights were now arrived upon the borders of a forest. Ere long they perceived a palfrey enjoying the tender herbage which flourished beneath the trees. His flesh was plump, his skin sleek, his housings gay and magnificent. At a little distance from him grazed another that was equally fat and smooth, although less gorgeously caparisoned.

The King of England and the Knight *of the Pitcher* agreed to enter the forest, conjecturing that they should there meet with some illustrious persons to whom these palfreys might belong. Having advanced for several paces, they at length beheld a lady of a venerable and afflicted aspect, who, with two other persons,

was

was sitting beneath the shade of a very ancient oak, that majestically spread his boughs to befriend them. Now, reader, these three persons were no other than the Lady Abbess of Heidelberg, accompanied by her usher, and her dwarf.

No sooner had the valiant *Cœur-de-Lion*, together with Sir Rodolpho, made his appearance in the presence of the lady already mentioned, than the King with a courteous air thus accosted her:—"Peradventure, reverend lady, some unknighly indignity, or some foul wrong, hath been offered to your sacrosanct person, in this dreary and tremendous wilderness, a place abounding, as I deem, with perils, and infested by caitiffs who have pity neither for sex nor for condition. Dangerous, very dangerous, in good truth, is it, reverend lady, for women of your rank, nay, of any

any rank whatsoever, to ride rashly in these deserts, with no other defenders than an usher and a dwarf. Nevertheless, reverend lady, if any in this forest have done outrage to yourself, or to these your humble followers, consider me, I beseech you, as your avenger, and employ the vigour of my arm how and where it shall seem good to you."

So spake the peerless Richard; and Rodolpho, glorying in the grand example, then made to the Lady Abbess the like proffer of his service: to both of whom she replied in the words which follow:—"No outrage, courteous and heroic knights, have I indeed suffered in my person; although grievously afflicted in mind, because of a certain mischief which this day hath come to pass, and which, for aught I know, may already proved irreparable. Know then,

courteous

courteous knights, that I am Superior of a convent of Carmelites, which I have governed for forty years with approbation and tranquillity. Many a comely maiden hath escaped, beneath my roof, the snares and perils of an ungodly world, and secured a seat in heaven by her austerities on earth.

“ But, as all things in this life are transitory, and good-fortune so long enjoyed might at length expect a reverse, the time, brave Sirs, arrived, at which I, careful as I was, should undergo a keen disaster. The Abbey of Heidelberg being wonderously old, and, like most things that are old, in a state of declination, the devout King of Bohemia, in expectation of a blessing either here or hereafter, invited us to take up our abode in a new edifice, which he had founded for the reception of a religious

gious society. The situation was salubrious, the soil fertile, the prospect extensive and delicious; moreover, it was in a very good neighbourhood. Whereupon, without hesitation, I accepted the magnificent and pious offer, and gave warning to the sisters to prepare for our departure.

“ Accordingly one morning, about a little after sun-rise, the sisters and myself mounted every one a palfrey; the officers of the convent, and the rest of the household, followed us in decorous order; in fine, nothing was found wanting to the prosperity of our migration. For three days did we travel without meeting any mishap, and I already exulted in secret at the propriety, and prudence, and success, with which I had conducted the damsels whom Religion had confided to me.

“ But,

“ But, alas ! courteous and considerate warriors, no sooner had we arrived within the limits of this forest, than Satan, that black enemy to all that is good and peaceable, suggested it to the sisters, that if the yoke of religion lay heavy upon their necks, there was now an opportunity to shake it off for ever, and re-mingle with that world which they had so thoughtlessly abandoned. Full therefore of this idea, the sisters, who but a little while before were most devout and well-satisfied virgins, on a sudden whipped their palfreys, and fled through divers alleys with a velocity inconceivable.

“ Of seven and forty damsels who composed our late community, not one continued faithful to her duty ; so general was the love of licentiousness, so unanimous the revolt. And now, wretch

Vol. I.

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that

that I am ! are these disobedient virgins (virgins did I say ? Blessed Catharine ! who can tell what may have happened to them ?) dispersed in various troops throughout this desert ; while here sit I, a decrepit Abbess of fourscore, both vexed and weary with my travel, and uncertain whether ever again I shall behold those bewitched and devil-directed damsels. It is true, I have dispatched fundry persons in pursuit of them : the sacristan, the sexton, the confessor, the verger, the choristers, the porter, and the warden of the buttery, have set out in different directions, to try if peradventure they can recover all or any of them. But I fear me, that the damsels are by this time undone, Alas ! alas ! alas !”

Here ended the Lady Abbess of Heidelberg ; then lamented with tears
very

very bitterly. To whom the King of England thus benignantly replied:—

“ It is yet too soon, good lady, to despair of the return of those virgins whom you betwail, and who, doubtless, by way of pastime, have withdrawn for a little while, to explore the pleasant regions of this forest. For know, venerable and discreet lady, that the operation of the fresh air upon the nerves and senses of persons little used to such excursions, is apt, not unfrequently, to beget a sudden hilarity, and a desire of recreation, especially in youthful minds. Recollect, my Lady Abbess, your own juvenile propensities, ere you were dedicated to the service of Heaven, and ere you shrouded from the view of mortals, those unparalleled perfections, of which, I dare be sworn, you were one day the envied mistress. I judge, venerable lady, from the remnants I

now behold. [Here the Abbess of Heidelberg rebuked the King of England; nevertheless she composed her ruff, and cast a look of satisfaction at him.] Esteem not then your flock as altogether irredeemable. This noble knight and I, and even the minstrel and the squire, will forthwith explore the forest, and describe to the holy sisters, if perchance we meet them (and I trust we shall), the immeasurable affliction you are suffering for their sakes."

So spake the peerless Richard, and, without further delay, wheeled his steed towards a narrow pathway which winded amongst the trees. The Knight of the *Pitcher* pursued a different track, as did likewise the minstrel, and the squire of short stature.

C H A P.

C H A P. XII.

AND here, virtuous reader, doth it become me to relate, with the pen of an honest historian, the exploits of the nuns of Heidelberg, in defence of that sweet liberty which all living creatures are solicitous to enjoy.

I have already enumerated what force had been sent against them. Zebediah, the sacristan, was the first to descry the fugitives. Sister Agnes and sister Agatha were galloping threw a glen, when the former, looking behind, espied the sacristan laying spurs to his palfrey, in the hope and desire of overtaking them. " Sister Agatha, sister Agatha," cried fair Agnes on a sudden, " Zebediah the sacristan is assuredly at our heels: holy Mary defend us from a second and a

worse captivity!" So saying, she whipped her palfrey with vigour.

"Peace, peace," replied the more courageous Agatha, "let the sacristan approach; he shall find us no easy conquest, if you will but imitate my example." She said, and descended from her palfrey, as did likewise the re-animated Agnes. Now the sacristan was a person well stricken in years; inso-much that, when he arrived where the damsels had dismounted, and was placing himself in a reputable posture, to upbraid them for their ungodly desertion of the Lady Abbess, they boldly and wantonly advanced upon him, and, having seized his beast by the bridle, plucked from his leathern girdle a rosary, the length of which was marvellous, and with it bound his nerveless arms behind him; he beseeching them,
for

for the sake of every saint in heaven, to abstain from offering him any injury.

But the vestals gave no heed to his entreaty. And now, having shackled his arms, they tied the bridle of his palfrey to a branch of an oak tree, and departed exulting in their victory. The disastrous Zebediah remained helpless and in bondage; and in this situation will we leave him, to the end that we may record what other deeds were done by the invincible heroines of Heidelberg.

King Richard and his companions, as we have already related, were dispersed in divers regions of the forest. Nor was it long till *Cœur-de-Lion*, intent on giving comfort to the Abbess, and on doing the saints good service, by recalling the fair fugitives to their duty,

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arrived

arrived at a verdant mead, where he beheld, with amaze and sorrow, the short squire of Sir Rodolpho in the midst of certain vestals, who were hustling him without pity from one corner to the other, as it were even by way of pastime. Whereupon the Royal Knight hastened thither, and, elevating his voice, conjured them, for the love of the Virgin, to have compassion on that little squire, who had not followed them from any discourteous or unsquirely inclination to pry into their merriment, but in obedience to the command of his superiors:

Nevertheless, they ceased not to torment that little squire; insomuch that he roared aloud, until the woods and hills resounded. At length, two joyous vestals, sister Mary and sister Magdalen, desirous of knowing if King Richard

were

were sent against them, or only some wandering knight, whom benevolence and the laws of chivalry had excited to interpose in behalf of that maltreated person, made a signal to their companions to desist, who thereupon set the squire at liberty. This done, the two damsels approached the King of England, when Magdalen, as spokeswoman, thus arrogantly questioned him: "And who is he, Sir Knight, that commanded this silly squire to explore our footsteps in the recesses of this wilderness?" She said; and the gallant Richard, having intreated their attention, addressed the whole assembly as follows: "Many others, ye daughters of sanctity, now seek ye throughout this forest. I, for one, ye vestals, was employed in the same search; and most cordially do I rejoice to have thus soon obtained 'a sight of ye. For I understand, from the
venerable

venerable Lady Abbess of Heidelberg, that ye have lately eloped from Religion, to which ye are said to be in some measure espoused. I beseech ye then, daughters of sanctity, to consider well the temerity of the deed which ye have done, and of the deeds which, peradventure, ye intend to do. Very perilous is it, vestals, for women of your youthfulness, and beauty, and particular attire, to be found wandering in the woods, or in any place whatever. Return, daughters of sanctity, return to your affectionate and afflicted directress, who now sits bewailing your condition in this thorny and deceitful life, and your forfeiture of the favour of the blessed. And here, misguided virgins, let me ask ye, what course ye have it in contemplation to pursue? If ye mean to live as ladies-errant in the woods and on the mountains, in what manner, I pray, are ye to provide yourselves

selves with sustenance? Ye cannot hunt, since ye are destitute of weapons that are necessary for the chase. Ye cannot here have bread, nor cheese, nor milk; for how should ye obtain them in the unpeopled wilderness? Berries haply ye may procure, and with them present a scanty and precarious supply to the necessities of nature; of nature rendered the more craving and insatiable by the rigours of the elements, and by the toilsome exercise which will be inseparable from your condition. Thus will ye at length become an emaciated, feeble, cadaverous assembly; discontented, remorseful, regretting the past, and affrighted at the future.

“ To rob, ye are unable, and, I hope too, disinclined. The other disasters which are incident to your sex, in regions so barbarous and unprotected, I forbear
to

to enumerate; well knowing that ye cannot but be already apprized of them. Compare, then, this miserable and alarming mode of life with that, inconsiderate virgins, which ye so rashly have deserted. Compare, I say, the damp and insalubrious caverns, in which it is most likely ye must take up your abode, to the comfortable dormitories of a well-built abbey, where ye are exposed neither to the vapours of a malignant atmosphere, nor to the midnight invasion of the ravisher [Here the sisterhood laughed very heartily]. Compare (and may the Saints above inspire you with the inclination), compare, deluded virgins, the raw roots, the cold berries, the wild and unfavoury herbs, which ye must feed on in the desert, to the regular, never-failing, nourishing, cheering, and palatable repasts, which are diurnally prepared for ye in the kitchen and the refectory.

Compare

Compare, I say again, the caves, the ditches, the bleak, windy, briary, rugged, savage situations, in which you will have to kneel, and chaunt your hymns, and make your orisons, with the costly, reverend, and awful fanes, where hitherto ye have been accustomed to adore the Powers of Heaven. No cushion to repose your wearied knees ; no stall to sit in, and meditate ; no verger to march before ye ; no choristers to aid your psalmody ; no organs to elevate your souls, and attune them to celestial sensations. Add to this, the discord which must inevitably prevail in a society without rules or government, without the motherly superintendance of some venerable virgin, whose dominion, I allow, is absolute, but whose wisdom, and virtue, and holiness, are a pledge for the just and clement exercise of that unlimited authority. Thus, daughters of sanctity,

sanctity, have I displayed before your eyes (and holy Mary grant I may have done it very effectually!) the dangers of the desert, and the comforts of the cloister: for I have reasoned on the supposition that ye were about to enter upon a wandering life, through regions yet uncivilized, and to abscond from the observation of society.

“ But if, vestals, on the contrary, ye indulge the desire of repairing to the castles of your kindred, and of mixing amongst men, as if ye were yet numbered with the laity, I would summon to your recollection, that, in that state also, there are obstructions undeniable, and which cannot be done away. For, admit, daughters of sanctity, that ye were this moment returned to the habitations of your progenitors, what astonishment, what indignation, what confusion,

fusion, what apprehension, would it not create suddenly in your respective families, to see those whom they had considered as for ever inclosed within the hallowed precincts of a cloister, now at large, and divested of their sanctimonious character! Methinks I hear some father exclaim, 'Is this Agnes, whom I dedicated to Heaven at the altar?' The very children in the market-place would hoot ye as ye passed, and cry, 'There goes the fugitive Carmelite.' Nor imagine that your condition would undergo a lucky change by your migration to the mansions of your kindred. Far from being rejoiced to behold ye, far from running eagerly to clasp ye in their arms, your brethren and your sisters, nay, even your remotest cousins, would but view ye with aversion, and consider ye as intruders into that power, or those possessions, which they long have expected to inherit.

herit. For ye have been looked upon as dead to this world, and to all things that are in it: ye would be to your kinsfolk as the ghosts of their departed forefathers, who would have pleased them a great deal better by continuing in their graves. What, therefore, O ye vestals, would be the issue of your revolution? Instead of that sweet liberty which ye fondly hoped to enjoy, ye would be immured in garrets, and in closets (I will not say in dungeons), locked up from all intercourse with human kind, excepting some crabbed bel-dame, employed by your persecutors to bring ye your bread and water. I believe, vestals, it is unnecessary to observe, that, compared with such a condition, a cloister would be Paradise.

“As to any hopes of altering your maiden state, by entering into connubial engage-

engagements, that, daughters of sanctity, I aver to be impossible. Ye are already the spouses of Christ. But, admitting that this insuperable bar had no existence, the mode of your education, and the customs of the cloister, have so moulded and stamped your dispositions as women, that ye are now in no wise eligible for the duties of the married state. A renegade nun will ever make an awkward wife. Moreover, vestals (and it is with much tenderness, indeed reluctance, that I mention it), some amongst ye, I apprehend, are already past those bounds where the bloom and the attractiveness of woman terminate [Here several of the sisterhood shewed symptoms of displeasure]. I would not, I vow to Nicholas, have entered upon this topic, were it not for its tendency to invigorate my argument. With relation to that other resource, which is so frequently

and successfully recurred to, that is to say, the compensating by an opulent dowry for the absence of youth, or charms; that resource, ye vestals, must prove utterly beyond your reach; inasmuch as that share of paternal possessions, which, had ye not assumed the veil, would naturally and equitably have been yours, hath, alas! long ago been diverted to other channels, whence, never, never more will it return. In fine, virgins, I can see no other prospect for ye in civil society, than to drag on a useless existence, portionless, husbandless, comfortless, the objects of derision, malevolence, and obloquy.

“ For these reasons, therefore, these cogent reasons, vestals, I advise, exhort, conjure ye, by the regard which ye entertain for your own earthly satisfaction, and by the interests of that holy calling

in

in which ye have wasted your youth and beauty, to relinquish the profane notion either of rambling through the woods, or of re-appearing in society, unsent for, undesired; and to return with diligence, and with contrition, to those altars which ye have heedlessly and irreverently deserted. Is comfort your aim? where, better than in the cloister, can ye find it? If glory and pre-eminence be what ye thirst for, the cloister can bestow them, to the very plenitude of your ambition. Recollect, deluded vestals, the many maidens of your vocation, who, by their singular devotion, their extraordinary austerities, their unwearied and unshakable attachment to the altar, have themselves (after their mortal part had descended to the grave) been dignified with altars by the gratitude of posterity. [By Saint Dominick, I have ye now, said the King of England to himself.]

Who can tell but some amongst ye may hereafter arrive, by a rigid and sanctimonious behaviour, at the elevation of the saintship, at the adoration of human kind? Divine honours shall be heaped upon ye; the beatified vestal will be enrolled amongst the blessed; the religious of all ages, of both sexes, and of all conditions, will crowd eagerly to her shrine from every kingdom in Christendom. The poor will look up to her for consolation and for aid; the rich, for a continuance of their luxuries. Reflect, then, upon these matters, and be wise. Not to mention, that, while the name of this new saint is thus exalted, while her memory is transmitted from generation to generation, her very countenance and figure shall be eternized on earth [Here the sisterhood redoubled their attention]; and that comeliness, which adorned her when living, but which was veiled from the

the majority of mortals, shaped out in wood, or in marble, or in plaster of Paris; and shall finally become the object of devoutest veneration, and of enthusiastic love. Consider, then, of these matters, and be wise. Behold honour, worship, immortality, within your grasp: return straitway to the cloister, and deserve them. There a venerable, affectionate, afflicted superintendant, will receive ye with a motherly joy; will delight in ye, as her sheep that had strayed and were found; and will consign your eccentricity to everlasting forgetfulness."

So spake King Richard. The result of his oration shall be recorded in the next chapter.

C H A P. XIII.

DEEP silence for a while ensued. At length a murmur of satisfaction arose from the virgin throng, whom King Richard, solicitous to secure his victory, forthwith invited to follow him, and rejoin the Lady Abbess of Heidelberg. Whereupon they repaired to their palfreys, that were grazing, and, having mounted them, set forward; the King of England leading the way, and exulting in secret at the success of his oratory, the sole weapon he durst have wielded in that memorable enterprize. The squire of Sir Rodolpho, now recovered from his tribulation, presented himself in the rear of this extraordinary cavalcade,

Through

Through many a thicket, and many a marsh, did they proceed, discoursing, ever and anon, of the rash project they had forsaken. And now, right before them, they descried a warrior, who proved, on a nearer approach, to be no other than Sir Rodolpho. King Richard, in a few words, informed him by what means he had prevailed on the nuns of Heidelberg to abandon their wild intention: all which gave Sir Rodolpho inexpressible delight; for he loved to relieve the miserable, as may already have been observed in the history which he related to the illustrious *Cœur-de-Lion*. Nor was it long, till, at the turning of a devious alley, they were met by the minstrel Fitzherbert, accompanied by the choristers and the warden of the buttery. Right joyful were these last to behold the sisters once again, and congratulated

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the two knights on the event of their expedition.

The sun had now withdrawn his splendency from the hemisphere, and twilight, the herald of darkness, had succeeded to the day: each object appeared less distinct, and silence, cheerless silence held dominion over the wilderness. The apprehension of being benighted, ere they could join the Lady Abbess, incited the hungry travellers to redouble their exertions. But, as dubious was the way, and the ground in many places unfaithful and infirm, some mischance, ever and anon, interrupted their celerity. Now shrill exclamations from the female throng, gave notice that sister Clara, or sister Catherine, was missing; again, that Adelaide was fast among the brambles; again, that Martha and Honoria were unable to travel farther,

farther, and in tears of deep despondency lamented their condition.

Amidst this aggregation of sorrows, the palfrey which carried the senior chorister, on a sudden stood still, and, notwithstanding the entreaties and the menaces of his rider, remained in the same posture immovable. They could not leave the chorister behind. Sir Rodolpho, therefore commanded his little squire to dismount, and accommodate the chorister with his palfrey; adding, that he himself might ride before one of the nuns, who would be contented with the crupper for the remainder of the journey. The squire without a murmur alighted: but fortune disappointed the benignity of both; for no sooner was the palfrey disburdened, than he bounded through an opening in an adjoining thicket, and, aided by his heels,

heels, and by the darkness, was quickly beyond the reach and the revenge of his pursuers ; for Fitzherbert and some choristers were endeavouring to overtake him.

Meanwhile the attention of the two knights, and of the nuns, was attracted by dismal accents, which, on listening, they recollected to be those of the little squire. The little squire, in attempting to detain his departing palfrey, had unwittingly advanced into the centre of a quagmire, where he sunk, without delay, to the shoulders. As the twilight was darkening apace, and the intervening branches excluded even the glimmering that remained, it was impossible to distinguish the sad squire, but by his voice, which uttered, ever and anon, the most alarming lamentations.

Con-

Confusion now reigned triumphant. The nuns wept and scolded; the King of England swore; while the Knight of *the Pitcher* upbraided his little squire for having lost the best of palfreys. Nevertheless, it was resolved that they should extricate the squire, and proceed without the palfrey of the chorister. For they deemed it the less evil to lose the beast, than their way, and the chance of soon rejoining the Lady Abbess of Heidelberg.

Accordingly Sir Rodolpho rode straightway to the quagmire, in which stood his squire immersed, and, without profiting by the recent misfortune, spurred his courser so impatiently, that the noble animal plunged suddenly into the morass, where, in struggling and floundering, he sunk up to his belly, without power to advance or retire. The miseries

ries of this company were now augmented. Sir Rodolpho cursed his steed; the nuns sobbed and crossed themselves; King Richard shouted to Fitzherbert and the choristers, who were now returning from their ineffectual chase, and bade them straitway strike a light, that they might look for the Knight of *the Pitcher*. The minstrel, who never travelled unprovided with a flint, soon obeyed the command of his Sovereign, and created such a fire as illuminated the forest far round. Sir Rodolpho and his squire were discovered, and with difficulty drawn to dry land. This effected, Fitzherbert took the chorister behind him, while Sir Rodolpho admitted upon the crupper of his steed the pale and shivering squire, who in his heart cursed the hour he first beheld the nuns of Heidelberg.

For-

Fortunately, however, for the travellers, they were now near the spot where King Richard and Sir Rodolpho had parted from the Lady Abbess, and where she had promised to await their return. They hastened forward, therefore, with their companions, a bespattered, wearied, hungry cavalcade, and, at last, to the delight of all, perceived the good Lady Abbess, her usher, and her dwarf, by the side of an aged elm, near which they had kindled a fire, as well to protect them from the monsters of the desert, as to serve for a direction to King Richard and his company. The penitential sisters sought forgiveness of their Superior, who with a venerable dignity reproved and pardoned them.

C H A P. XIV.

AND now the wants of nature required a prompt relief. Nor knight, nor vestal, nor squire, nor chorister, had taken aught of sustenance that day; nor had the Lady Abbess herself, nor her usher, nor her dwarf, either eaten or drunk, from the departure of the sisterhood; so anxious, so afflicted were their bosoms.

The dwarf, therefore, and the usher, at the instigation of their lady, and with the assistance of the squire and the minstrel, erected, firstly, a capacious tent, which the Abbess had brought with her in her baggage; they then formed a table of branches and dry fods, and having covered it with canvas, displayed thereon those viands which had hitherto lain

lain dormant in the panniers of a sumpter-mule; such conveniences being necessary in the forests of Bohemia.

Meanwhile, the joy of the Lady Abbess and her vestals was not a little increased by the arrival of sister Agnes and sister Agatha, who had originally strayed in a direction somewhat different from that which was adopted by the majority of the fugitives.

After tying up the sacristan, they had wandered through the woods, uncertain what course to pursue; till at length the fires, which had been kindled at the close of evening, and the effects of which were seen at a considerable distance, determined them to turn their palfreys to that quarter, expecting there to meet with the remainder of the sisterhood. With respect to the unhappy
sacristan,

sacristan, they entertained no doubt that he continued in the same posture in which they had confined him. Whereupon the junior choristers, all-weary as they were, were dispatched by the Lady Abbess to give liberty to the sacristan, who, in truth, decrepit man, had proved the first and severest sufferer.

The satisfaction of the Superior was still farther augmented, by the timely return of the other officers of her household; to wit, the verger, the porter, and the warden of the buttery. On their way, these had met with the confessor, who had been pillaged and maltreated by certain caitiffs of the forest, and who now presented himself a woeful and wrathful figure to the abashed and affrighted sisterhood. A bitter penance was enjoined them, and a double portion

to

to the virgins who had done mischief to the sacristan.

Justice being thus inflicted, and the whole company re-assembled, they enlivened their faint limbs with certain cordials of the Lady Abbess, which she had providently stowed in the panniers of the sumpter-mule : after which, they seated themselves at their rustic table, a numerous and motley crew, and there soothed the rage of hunger with various and delicious meats, that might have vied in their abundance, and in their exquisite flavour, with the banquets of barons and princes. Now Mirth re-assumed her empire : now pleasing conversation and beverage went round. The Lady Abbess forgot her cares, the nuns their folly, the rest their losses, their bruises, their fatigues. May the mis-

ries of human kind ever experience the like happy conclusion !

The viands being at length removed, and the squire of Sir Rodolpho, with the domestics of the convent, retired to an outer tent, to appease their impatient appetites with the residue of the banquet, King Richard thus addressed the Lady Abbess :—" Most exceedingly do I marvel, reverend and discreet lady, at the vigour and intrepidity with which, at your advanced years, you have despised the toils and perils of this migration. A vigilant and able shepherdess, you have conducted your tender flock in quest of remote pastures : you go, like another Dido, to found an empire in a strange land, and to render your name adorable in Bohemia, as in Heidelberg. Nevertheless, respected lady, I am at a loss to divine, why one possessing such
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an operative and heroic mind (and what must it have been, before time had set his seal upon your head?) should have preferred the repose and obscurity of a convent, to the energy and lustre of a temporal situation. Not but that, as I observed to these fair vestals in the forest, even the cloister hath its allurements for the enterprising heart, its career of solemn glory that must terminate in immortality. Yet still, most reverend lady, there are virtues of a certain hue which nature seems to have fashioned for a certain end, and the world sustains a damage when such virtues are withdrawn from it.

So spake the princely *Cœur-de-Lion*.
What followed shall be related in the ensuing chapter.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.